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NOTES OF THE WEEK

A BRITISH Note was despatched to France at the beginning of the week containing suggestions for an accord on the question of Inter-Allied Debts. The principle of the Balfour Note is reiterated. Once more it is affirmed that Great Britain must obtain from ex-allies and ex-enemies jointly no more and no less than the sum required to cover the service of our debt to the United States. France's insistence that she should only have to pay in the measure that Germany pays her has not been heeded, but a certain concession has been made to her point of view by the proposal that part of the French payment should be a fixed proportion of the French share of the Dawes Annuities, the remainder being a stable and unconditional charge on the French Budget. Paris received the note politely, but has apparently no intention of acquiescing in its proposals without a struggle for balancing "concessions"—for France looks upon any payment of her debt to us as a concession. Under the cloak of such concessions, "security" is being dragged into the Debt

question, as into the Disarmament question, with an equal lack of relevance in either case. Italy remains an attentive watcher. Her attitude in this matter is fairly frank. She has not so far shown the smallest intention of paying anybody anything, although broad hints have been thrown out that her lesser capacity to pay would be generously considered in the assessment of her share of the Continental liability to Great Britain.

MORAL DISARMAMENT

"Security" in the sense of post war politics is not easy to define. One of our war aims as enunciated by the *ci-devant* Mr. Asquith was that we should fight "till France and Belgium be safeguarded from the menace of military aggression" (we quote from memory). But just as the Impressionist artists discovered that landscape was not an accumulation of rustic paraphernalia but a state of mind, so we are slowly learning that Security means not a preponderance of guns and trained men on one side of a frontier but a state of mind on either side. The French papers implicitly recognize this when they point out that Germany is still morally armed. Of course she is; and must

Everything's right—
if it's a

Remington
TYPEWRITER

First in 1873—
First to-day!

unfortunately remain so until France herself makes serious progress in moral disarmament. Unlike the physical, the moral process is necessarily reciprocal. M. Herriot seemed last week to have lost the grasp of this simple truth which he had previously shown. The project for a modified version of the Geneva Protocol to cover only the chief European countries, which is apparently being nursed in French Governmental circles, deserves close attention here.

FRENCH DEBTS AND FRENCH AEROPLANES

It is not remarkable that if one suggests to a Frenchman that he is under-taxed he resents the imputation. Anyone would; it is a natural reaction, like a farmer resenting the suggestion that it has been a good year for agriculture. But, apart from that, it must be remembered that France is only under-taxed in comparison with Great Britain, who is heavily over-taxed. Nevertheless, the comparative wealth of France and Great Britain does not show anything like the same discrepancy as a comparison of their respective taxations. Nor does a comparison of their prosperity. It is, we think, pertinent and just to inquire why, with a Budget that will not balance and a heavy debt, the repayment of which, at all events up till now, has not even been begun, France's expenditure on war aircraft should be so heavy. The French Air Force already outnumbers the Royal Air Force in machines enormously, yet a further increase is contemplated, and a vast new bombing aerodrome is to be constructed on the Channel coast. In reply to this the British Government will have to, and are going to, provide for a further expansion of the Royal Air Force.

AN ARMAMENT RACE

In the U.S.A. the question of air force expansion is causing acute controversy. Furthermore, we have lately come into possession of significant and ominous facts concerning the feverish activity of Japan in aircraft production. We have here, then, all the elements of an armaments race similar to, but much greater than, that which burdened the world in the years preceding the "war to end war." This is a grim reflection on the pious aspirations of the Washington Conference, which carefully excluded from its scope those engines of warfare which will form the most potent agencies of destruction in future wars. We will not say that to limit battleships while permitting light cruisers, submarines, aeroplanes, and airships to be multiplied without check is like putting a ban on bows and arrows without limiting the use of gunpowder, but it comes near to such futility. A conference on real disarmament seems to be indicated.

AN EASTERN ENTENTE?

On several occasions recently we have commented on the significance of the Sino-Soviet-Japanese Agreements, and so important are they that we make no apology for returning to the subject this week. We notice a statement by M. Rakovsky, quoted in the *Soviet Union Review*, in which he said that "the conclusion has been drawn [in the British Press] that the resumption of normal relations with Japan would be followed inevitably by an alliance between the U.S.S.R.,

Japan, and China, and that this would result in a complete regrouping of forces in Asia. There is no foundation for such a hypothesis," he declared, "but there is no doubt that the establishment of peaceful friendly relations between the three countries would be of great historical importance." His admission that the agreements are "of great historical importance" cancels out his earlier claim that they will not result in "a complete regrouping of forces in Asia." The existence of the agreements constitutes such a regrouping, and they are only "of great historical importance" because of this very fact. M. Rakovsky added that his Government desired, "most strongly and sincerely," to establish friendly relations with Britain; but he did not add that the strength and sincerity of their desire was dictated by their urgent need of foreign capital.

THE PROTECTION OF INDUSTRIES

The apostles of Free Trade have had some difficulty in deciding whether the Government's proposals for the safeguarding of British industries against "unfair" competition are the worst or the best that could have been put forward. Loving Free Trade, and hating the iniquity of Protection, they have differed among themselves as to whether they should make the best of a bad business or denounce the proposals as the more dangerous for their modesty. Have they to do with the minimum of Protection, granted piecemeal and with elaborate precautions, or with a peculiarly vicious method of insinuating Protection into the fiscal system of the country? They have found it hard to decide. But what troubles the average Conservative is whether the aid promised to menaced industries will not, in some instances at least, come too late.

THE CONTROVERSY OVER ST. PAUL'S

The Government should intervene to allay the anxiety about St. Paul's. That great monument is alternately alleged to be in extreme peril and in need of nothing more than the bolstering up which can be provided out of the funds privately subscribed. On one side we are told that its collapse is, if not exactly imminent, yet quite possible; on the other, we are urged to frequent it for devotions as confidently as in the past. This is a state of affairs quite intolerable. We urge the Government to appoint a small expert committee to inquire at once into the whole position. If St. Paul's can be rendered thoroughly safe by expenditure of the £230,000 now subscribed, in the manner proposed, well and good. If not, the Government should provide additional funds, and insist on a thorough scheme of preservation. It ill becomes the nation to wrangle over Wren's masterpiece.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE ON HIMSELF

On Monday, Mr. Lloyd George received the freedom of the City of Hull, and made his visit the occasion of an astonishing oration. Mr. Lloyd George is a great stage manager, but he misjudges the mood of the country if he imagines, as his speech appeared to show, that he can regain its confidence by recalling his services in the war. Nor will the public like him any the better for the nimbleness with which he pays himself half-veiled compliments. "It was the nation with the best politicians which came out of the war victorious,"

said Mr. George. Granting for the moment that victory in more than name was won by Britain and her Allies, was their success really due to the superiority of their politicians over those of the enemy? Then Germany's politicians must have been bad indeed. But it does no real harm for Mr. Lloyd George to enjoy the fiction that he won the Great War. The part he played in an earlier war in which his country was engaged was possibly less glorious. By what process of reasoning, then, did he conceive it to be necessary, or in good taste, to place a wreath on the Boer War Memorial in Hull?

IMPERIAL AIRWAYS

The Report of the Court of Inquiry into the air crash near Croydon on Christmas Eve was issued on Wednesday of this week. Quite rightly, as we think, it exonerated everyone concerned from blame. The exact cause of the accident could not be finally established; but despite the zeal of counsel for one of the victim's relatives, who made, no doubt in the interests of truth and justice, gallant efforts to discover evidence of inefficiency, it was made clear in the course of the Inquiry that this was an accident that might have occurred anywhere, at any time, and was in no way due to lack of proper inspection or control. We are glad for the sake of commercial aviation that it was so. Out of the evil of the disaster two good things will come. First, the aerodrome at Croydon will be enlarged, and secondly, the D.H. 34 type of aeroplane will be superseded by a more suitable machine. The recommendations of the Court regarding a machine with a lower stalling speed were apt and timely.

MUSSOLINI AND THE VATICAN

Surprising news was given by the *Morning Post* on Wednesday to the effect that Signor Mussolini was about to conclude a Pact with his Holiness the Pope, following upon which the Supreme Pontiff would set off for a trip round the world. It seems to us unlikely that the Vatican, with its keen instinct for good bargains, would choose the present moment for tying itself up with a rickety regime. The partial calm that has set in in Italian politics means nothing but that the Government's repressive measures have successfully silenced constitutional opposition, while the great body of Mussolini's opponents, consisting not of scarlet Bolsheviks but of moderate Liberals, have no desire to plunge the country into chaos by adopting unconstitutional methods. It must be remembered, too, that the Catholic Popular Party is by no means extinct. It represents a section of Italian Catholicism strongly opposed to the Fascist movement which the Vatican can hardly mean to flout. Meanwhile, the Vatican has also had to consider its relations with France. The abolition of the French Embassy to the Vatican has been followed by a palliative in the shape of the creation of a Mission to represent Alsace-Lorraine, which ranks as still coming under the old Franco-Papal Concordat, at the Holy See. The Pope has taken the rather unusual step of pronouncing an oration of protest against the French action and having it printed in the Vatican organ, the *Osservatore Romano*.

AUSTRALIA'S POPULATION

Sydney has the satisfaction of being the first Australian city to reach a population of one million. Victoria is not far behind. Between them these two cities contain about a third of the entire population of the Commonwealth, which in round figures approaches six millions. If to the populations of Sydney and Melbourne we add those of Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth, and Hobart, it will be found that not far short of half the people in Australia are resident in and about the capital cities of the five States. When one considers the size of the Australian continent and compares that size with the acreage of the cities the need of population to till the soil and develop the resources of the Commonwealth becomes very apparent. Taking the decennial increases the percentage in 1860 was 182.61, in 1920 that percentage had fallen to 22.29.

MORE MIGRATION

During the period of the last sixty years the growth of the population was under five millions, yet we are constantly being told by Australian orators that in five and twenty years the population of Australia may be expected to double itself. That same prophecy was made a quarter of a century ago, but the "inevitable" has never happened. Surely it is time that the Imperial and the Commonwealth Governments put their heads together and inaugurated some joint scheme of migration that will give to Australia a population more in keeping with its size and importance. We see it stated that a deputation in Melbourne a few days ago urged upon the Minister for Home and Territory that more immigrants from Great Britain should be encouraged to come to Australia wholly at Australia's expense if necessary. The suggestion is one which in our opinion is well worth the consideration of the Federal Government.

THE "SOUTHERN" AND THE PRESS

The volume of correspondence—we print a selection from it on another page—which has reached us in response to our Note last week on the Southern Railway's enterprises in the field of publicity proves how strongly feelings have been roused. Since the Southern Railway have decided upon this method of quietening criticism there is no more to be said, now. Whether they will succeed in their attempt is another matter. Judging by the tone of the letters we have received, they have gravely miscalculated the effects of their venture. They have also to face the difficulty of keeping their promises—a wilful complication, which might so easily have been avoided.

LORD BLYTH

The late Lord Blyth was a man of unbounded energy. He frequently attended the debates in the House of Lords, and was also a familiar figure in the Lobby of the Commons. In the early days of the Empire Parliamentary Association Lord Blyth was its main support and, if we remember rightly, was its first chairman. On agricultural matters his opinion was much sought after, particularly with regard to stock-breeding, and for many years he was an annual visitor to Sandringham for the annual stock sale.

PARLIAMENT AT WORK AGAIN

THE Conservatives have had moderately good fortune in the ballot for Private Members' Bills to be introduced in the House of Commons this session, and in the reassembled House an early opportunity will therefore arise for one or other of the numerous Conservative members who wish to introduce a Bill amending the law that governs the Trade Union political levy. Reform of that law is grossly overdue. The scandalous state of affairs in which a non-Socialist worker is forced to finance Socialism or to make himself a marked man is utterly incapable of defence. Conservatives, of course, are of one mind on the subject, but there would seem to be some hesitation in the attitude of Liberals towards it. It is notorious that in the semi-secret discussions of the Liberals a great deal of sympathy with the proposed reform has been expressed by the rank-and-file, but officially the little Liberal group is not committed, and one or two of its advisers in the Press seem to be in terror lest it be rushed into direct attack on the political levy.

Similar hesitancy has been revealed by Liberals in their attitude towards the Government's cautious proposals for the protection of industry against "unfair" foreign competition. Liberalism, left with nothing but Free Trade to cling to, may be relied upon to discover Protection of the extremest and therefore wickedest kind in the most modest and guarded scheme for securing a fair chance for British industry. But while the Liberals have as with one nose smelled out the Protectionist iniquity, they have been of two minds as to whether a Vote of Censure or a mere raising of the question on a motion for the adjournment of the House would be their wiser course. The country, however, cares little what line may be taken by a party shrunk in numbers and influence to the point at which its actions have scarcely any practical effect. What does occupy the public mind is the question whether the Government's proposals are adequate. In offering protection, without the majuscule, to British industries, the Government limit the offer in several ways, and notably to industries suffering from "unfair" competition. Morally, this limitation is very soothing. It implies that British industry will put up its guard only when it has been hit well below the belt, and only after the proper authorities have been seriously impressed by the size and colour of the bruises. But, from an economic point of view, it matters not in the least whether British industry is smitten above the belt or below it. All that matters is the severity of the blow. Wherever there is successful competition, or even competition that threatens to become successful, there is a case for protection, provided that it can be set up without directly or indirectly doing more harm than good. The procedure proposed by the Government is not of the rapidest, and it is conceivable that on occasion the protection given a menaced British industry might come too late to be really effective.

These and similar criticisms have been heard of late from Conservatives who are by no means fanatics for Protection, and from business men who are indifferent to the old fiscal controversy.

Whatever force they may have, and they certainly have some, it is unreasonable to blame the Government for not going further. Years of propaganda have not created in this country any general willingness to look at these questions simply as questions of expediency, each of which should be examined without reference to the abstract principles so sacred to the old-fashioned Free Trader and the old-fashioned Tariff Reformer. The Government has done substantially what it could in a situation which it cannot at present alter.

It has to walk warily, for all the size of its majority, since at so many points in its programme it must be exposed to misrepresentation of a more or less plausible kind. If the less intelligent or less scrupulous among Liberals can suggest that the Government, in taking power to safeguard particular industries after a special case has been made out for each, is bringing in Protection, corresponding elements among the Socialists can suggest that the Government is animated by hostility towards organized Labour and is less sympathetic than it should be towards the unemployed. If the wilder elements in Socialism can secure pretexts for making the Government appear hostile to Labour at large, industrial troubles and the workers' suspicions will check the progress of some of the Government's most useful schemes. Already we have seen the Socialists foolishly and peevishly boycotting the agricultural conference. We may see other attempts, besides those already made with only too much success, to delay or render unworkable the schemes whereby the housing problem would be mitigated if not solved. That there will be an outcry over the Trade Union political levy is obvious. We hardly need fear, however, any general complaint that the overdue tightening up of dole administration is inspired by any but the best motives.

The Government's motive in that matter of the dole is simply a desire to stop leakage and waste. But, it need not be said, much more than avoidance of waste will be necessary if Mr. Churchill is to give the nation the relief that it needs. He will have to call upon all spending departments for a sincere reconsideration of their demands. It was, we think, an evil day when the axe was made the symbol of such economies as he must demand. By the popular acceptance of that symbol there has been encouraged a notion that a mere hacking at estimates, so that it be drastic enough, can meet the situation. But what the nation has to do, under the guidance of Mr. Churchill and of the Government as a whole, is to examine afresh its situation and its needs, and to determine what things are truly necessary to the corporate welfare and what, though desirable, or delightful to Socialists, or now regarded as usual, are really luxuries. Mere economy in administration, necessary as it is, will not suffice. If we are to get any substantial relief, we must as a nation reconsider our whole way of life. We must, as Conservatism calls upon us to do, severely limit the sphere of the State, and in the interests alike of finance and of the national character, throw back upon the private citizen and upon voluntary associations of citizens those responsibilities which traditionally and properly rested there till Socialists, and those who sought to outbid them, thrust all these burdens on the State.

VALENTINE'S DAY

OLD fashions are forgotten, and new manners push them out of place, rudely and easily enough, but they may be still fragrant in some remembrances. Stupid and dull as they seem now, they had their long vogue; they brought enjoyment and profit. To-day, there is little need to smother dear old Mrs. Grundy's objections, for she has small chance to be heard, when she opens her mouth. But earlier, when conduct was a Victorian ideal, the chances of romance may have been sweeter, because rarer, and Saint Valentine, a gallant disguised in saint-hood, and boldly proclaimed a bishop, was a great discovery for young men and maidens.

To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine.

Thus sang poor Ophelia, and to-day her song might be cumbered with a learned note. No gracious lady of the future, born on February 14, runs the risk of being dubbed "Valentina." The Valentine that we knew has taken its departure to Proserpine's orchards, where its forgotten flowers may still flourish. Not for our advanced age, the missives, sometimes all satin and forget-me-nots with pierced hearts in the middle, sometimes, strangely enough, all crude fun and hideous ugliness, sent on the Day, with a maximum of secrecy through the undiscerning post, to a chosen recipient. *Der Tag*, like another we heard a good deal of, is sunk in forgetfulness, and perhaps its need is gone in our freer times. The *tendresse*—characteristically, there is no English for it—is not so often howled out of sight as indecent, or translated by an indignant and unreasonable watchdog of a parent into "intentions." The Valentine was privileged, and we might say of it what the Duke in 'Twelfth Night' said of the Clown's despairing love-ditty:

It is silly sooth,
And dallies with the innocence of love.

In the country, where a gallant could ride by, looking well on a horse, and pause at the window of his Dulcinea, who was fresh as the morning dew and no late riser of the town, the Valentine attained its most picturesque setting. But, looking back on the past, we find the most effective acolytes and praisers of the cult are Londoners. Mr. Pepys, no innocent gallant, we fear, as a rule, chose his February fair maid with the excitement of a boy. Often he was stingy enough to think of the cost, but after all he managed to give "a dozen pair of white gloves" or "silke stockings." Mrs. Pepys once forbore to see the "paynters in the house" as not suitable Valentines. Another day little Will Mercer "brought her name writ upon blue paper in gold letters, done by himself, very pretty; and we were both well pleased with it."

After Pepys, that determined Londoner, Charles Lamb, exercised all his quaint fancy on 'Valentine's Day' for those who are not too wise to despise old legends. For him a century ago:

This is the day on which those charming missives, ycleped Valentines, cross and intercross each other at every street and turning. The weary and all forspent twopenny postman sinks beneath a load of delicate embarrassments not his own. It is scarcely credible to what an extent this ephemeral court-

ship is carried on in this loving town, to the great enrichment of porters, and detriment of knockers and bell-wires. In these little visual interpretations, no emblem is so common as the *heart*—that little three-cornered exponent of all our hopes and fears—the bestuck and bleeding heart; it is twisted and tortured into more allegories and affectations than an opera hat.

Lamb notes that it was not all amorous folly, for his friend E. B., an artist of no common powers, made a wondrous Valentine for a girl all joyousness and innocence, and she, who had no lover, took it as a fairy present, a "benefit received, where the benefactor was unknown." "All sentiment!" says, perhaps, the wise youth of to-day, but he, too, is human, and kinder than he would have us believe.

Lamb wrote in a copy of 'Cælebs in Search of a Wife' by the fortunately inimitable Hannah More:

If ever I marry a wife,
I'll marry a landlord's daughter,
For then I may sit in the bar,
And drink cold brandy and water.

He wrote under great provocation, and did not mean it, of course, but his touch of jollity not afraid of vulgarity takes us easily to the Marquis of Granby, once blessed by the great presence and ample thirst of Mr. Antony Weller. That wisest of all coach-drivers and connoisseur of widows advised his son about the wording of a Valentine. It was actually at the Blue Boar that Sam, taking no warning from his father's "wicious propensities," was heartened by nine pennorth o' brandy and water to an effort that ended:

Your lovesick
Pickwick.

It is just as well that Serjeant Buzfuz never got hold of this, for it might have increased the damages at the trial. But Sam took no greater liberty than the servant of stately old Pendennis, who called himself "Morgan Pendennis."

Clever as writers are to-day, and deep in revelations of things that once were mysteries, they cannot rival the gaiety of Charles Dickens. In 1837 he stood by his new door at 48 Doughty Street, with a head full of inexhaustible humours and the confidence of genius. He was charming the world with 'Pickwick,' and already had made his triumphant way to being the most familiar of English authors. Time, the wisest, if the cruellest, of judges, has not certified as first-rate all that his admirers dote on to-day. But the humours of the immortal Cockney, the gaieties of old-time London, the ways of waiters and the pleasures of sound food, the solemn absurdities of the great, the greatness of the poor and miserable—these things Dickens revealed with a knowledge and range and gusto no one has equalled since. Now, this house in Doughty Street is to be full of his books and memories, not a museum, we hope, in the dead sense the term holds to-day, but a living warmth of reminiscence. The proposal is excellent and deserves wide support. Every scrap in which Dickens was concerned fetches fantastic prices, and Mr. Matz's collection of Dickensian books, generously presented, is a huge Valentine for the public. Why should we hesitate to use the word by way of compliment? A Valentine may be out of date, but it is gay and kind. It has no pernicious influence on crowds of sensible people; it does not spoil conversation; it is not solemn and futile, like a cross-word puzzle.

BOOKS FOR THE JOURNEY

BY ALDOUS HUXLEY

ALL tourists cherish an illusion, of which no amount of experience can ever completely cure them; they imagine that they will find time, in the course of their travels, to do a lot of reading. They see themselves, at the end of a day's sight-seeing or motoring, or while they are sitting in the train, studiously turning over the pages of all the vast and serious works which at ordinary seasons they never find time to read. They start for a fortnight's tour in France, taking with them 'The Critique of Pure Reason,' 'Appearance and Reality,' the complete works of Dante, and 'The Golden Bough.' They come home to make the discovery that they have read something less than half a chapter of the 'Golden Bough' and the first fifty-two lines of the 'Inferno.' But that does not prevent them from taking just as many books the next time they set out on their travels.

Long experience has taught me to reduce in some slight measure the dimensions of my travelling library. But even now I am far too optimistic about my powers of reading while on a journey. Along with the books which I know it is possible to read, I still continue to put in a few impossible volumes in the pious hope that some day, somehow, they will get read. Thick tomes have travelled with me for thousands of kilometres across the face of Europe and have returned with their secrets unviolated. But whereas in the past I took nothing but thick tomes, and a great quantity of them at that, I now take only one or two, and for the rest pack only the sort of books which I know by experience can be read in a hotel bedroom after a day's sight-seeing.

The qualities essential in a good travelling book are these. It should be a work of such a kind that one can open it anywhere and be sure of finding something interesting, complete in itself, and susceptible of being read in a short time. A book requiring continuous attention and prolonged mental effort is useless on a voyage; for leisure, when one travels, is brief and tinged with physical fatigue, the mind distracted and unapt to make protracted exertions. Few travelling books are better than a good anthology of poetry in which every page contains something complete and perfect in itself. The brief respites from labour which the self-immolated tourist allows himself cannot be more delightfully filled than with the reading of poetry, which may even be got by heart; for the mind, though reluctant to follow an argument, takes pleasure in the slight labour of committing melodious words to memory. In the choice of anthologies every traveller must please himself. My own favourite is Edward Thomas's 'Pocket Book of Poems and Songs for the Open Air.' Thomas was a man of wide reading and of exquisite taste, and peculiarly gifted, moreover, to be an anthologist of the open air. For out of the huge tribe of modern versifiers who have babbled of green fields, Thomas is almost the only one whom one feels to be a "nature poet" (the expression is somehow rather horrible, but there is no other) by right of birth and the conquest of real sympathy and understanding. It is not everyone who says Lord, Lord, that shall enter into

the kingdom of heaven; and few, very few of those who cry Cuckoo, Cuckoo, shall be admitted into the company of nature poets. For proof of this, I refer my readers to the various volumes of Georgian poetry.

Equally well adapted, with poetry, to the traveller's need, are collections of aphorisms or maxims. If they are good—and they must be very good indeed, for there is nothing more dismal than a "Great Thought" enunciated by an author who has not himself the elements of greatness—maxims make the best of all reading. They take a minute to read and provide matter upon which thought can ruminate for hours. None are to be preferred to La Rochefoucauld's. Myself, I always reserve my upper left-hand waistcoat pocket for a small sexto-decimo reprint of the 'Maximes.' It is a book to which there is no bottom or end. For with every month that one lives, with every accession to one's knowledge both of oneself and of others, it means something more. La Rochefoucauld knew almost everything about the human soul, so that nearly every discovery one can make oneself, as one advances through life, has been anticipated by him and formulated in the briefest and most elegant phrases. I say advisedly that La Rochefoucauld knew "almost" everything about the human soul; for it is obvious that he did not know all. He knew everything about the souls of human beings in so far as they are social animals. Of the soul of man in solitude—of man when he is no more interested in the social pleasures and successes which were, to La Rochefoucauld, so all-important—he knows little or nothing. If we desire to know something about the human soul in solitude—in its relations, not to man, but to God—we must go elsewhere: to the Gospels, to the novels of Dostoevsky, for example. But man in his social relationships has never been more accurately described, and his motives never more delicately analysed, than by La Rochefoucauld. The aphorisms vary considerably in value; but the best of them, and their number is surprisingly large, are astonishingly profound and pregnant. They resume a vast experience. In a sentence La Rochefoucauld compresses as much material as would serve a novelist for a long story. Conversely, it would not surprise me to learn that many novelists turn to the 'Maximes' for suggestions for plots and characters. It is impossible, for example, to read Proust without being reminded of the 'Maximes,' or the 'Maximes' without being reminded of Proust. "Le plaisir de l'amour est d'aimer, et l'on est plus heureux par la passion que l'on a que par celle que l'on donne." "Il y a des gens si remplis d'eux memes, que lorsqu'ils sont amoureux ils trouvent moyen d'etre occupés de leur passion sans l'être de la personne qu'ils aiment." What are all the love stories in 'A la Recherche du Temps Perdu' but enormous amplifications of these aphorisms? Proust is La Rochefoucauld magnified ten thousand times.

Another excellent book for a journey—for it combines expansive aphorisms with anecdotes—is Boswell's 'Life of Johnson' which the Oxford Press now issues, on India paper, in a single small octavo volume. All travellers, by the way, owe much to the exertions of Henry Frowde, of the Oxford Press, the inventor, or, at least, the European reinventor, of that fine rag paper, impregnated with mineral matter to give it opacity,

which we call India paper. What the aphorism is to the philosophical treatise, the India paper volume is to the ponderous editions of the past. All Shakespeare, perfectly legible, gets into a volume no bigger than a single novel by the late Charles Garvice. All Pepys, or as much of him as the British public is allowed to read, can now be fitted into three pockets. And the Bible, reduced to an inch in thickness, must surely be in danger of losing those bullet-stopping qualities which it used, at any rate in romantic novels, to possess. Thanks to Henry Frowde, one can get a million words of reading matter into a rucksack and hardly feel the difference in its weight.

India paper and photography have rendered possible the inclusion in a portable library of what in my opinion is the best traveller's book of all—a volume (any one of the thirty-two will do) of the twelfth, half-size edition of the 'Encyclopædia Britannica.' It takes up very little room (eight and a half inches, by six and a half by one is not excessive), it contains about a thousand pages, and an almost countless number of curious and improbable facts. It can be dipped into anywhere, its component chapters are complete in themselves and not too long. For the traveller, disposing as he does only of brief half hours, it is the perfect book, the more so, since I take it that, being a born traveller, he is likely also to be one of those desultory and self-indulgent readers to whom the Encyclopædia, when not used for some practical purpose, must specially appeal. I never pass a day away from home without taking a volume with me. It is the book of books. Turning over its pages, rummaging among the stores of fantastically varied facts which the hazards of alphabetical arrangement bring together, I wallow in my mental vice. A stray volume of the Encyclopædia is like the mind of a learned madman—stored with correct ideas, between which, however, there is no other connexion than the fact that there is a B in both. From Orach, or mountain spinach, one passes direct to oracles. That one does not oneself go mad, or become in the process of reading the Encyclopædia a mine of useless and unrelated knowledge is due to the fact that one forgets. The mind has a vast capacity for oblivion. Providentially; otherwise, in the chaos of futile memories, it would be impossible to remember anything useful or coherent. In practice, we work with generalizations, abstracted out of the turmoil of realities. If we remembered everything perfectly we should never be able to generalize at all; for there would appear before our minds nothing but individual images, precise and different. Without ignorance we could not generalize. Let us thank heaven for our powers of forgetting. With regard to the Encyclopædia, they are enormous. The mind only remembers that of which it has some need. Five minutes after reading about mountain spinach, the ordinary man, who is neither a botanist nor a cook, has forgotten all about it. Read for amusement, the Encyclopædia serves only to distract for the moment; it does not instruct, it deposits nothing on the surface of the mind that will remain. It is a mere time-killer and momentary tickler of the mind. I only use it for amusement on my travels; I should be ashamed to indulge so wantonly in mere curiosity at home, during seasons of serious business.

THE REVIVAL OF HANDEL AT CAMBRIDGE

BY DYNELEY HUSSEY

IT is funny the way some people refuse to stay put. Not long ago everybody, that is to say everybody who was in his own estimation anybody at all, had decided that the late George Frederic Handel was a colossal bore. So they called him a German, and buried him in the graveyard of back-numbers. Incidentally, while they were digging the hole into which they were to fling his remains, they came upon a coffin marked J. S. B., which they carried off, opened, and put into the best glass-case in the musical museum. But what they failed to realize was that they did not know the real Handel. They knew only a body afflicted with elephantiasis so badly developed that it could not be got into anything smaller than the Albert Hall or the Crystal Palace. This process of augmentation seems to have begun soon after the composer's death; for in 1784 the first of the Handel Festivals was given with a chorus of 275 and an orchestra of 250, of whom twenty-six were oboes. But what is that compared to the multitudes who have performed the 'Messiah' in more recent years?

But genius will out, and, while no one was looking, the corpse kicked the sods off his grave and began to appear surreptitiously in other forms than that of a "sacred" composer. Then Germany discovered the Italian operas and they gained a popular success, for all that Sir Henry Hadow dismisses these revivals as being of no more than antiquarian interest. Now Cambridge, ever in the van of musical revivalism, has put 'Semele' on the stage. Just as in 1911 Mr. Edward Dent proved that the 'Magic Flute,' which Covent Garden had regarded as impracticable, could be done by a more or less amateur company with intelligence, and thereby paved the way for its present popularity, so it may be that this week's performances will kindle interest in Handel's dramatic works.

But, in the present instance, the chief criticism one has to make is that 'Semele' is not a dramatic work at all. This is no criticism of Handel, but of the Cambridge producers who have put upon the stage a work that was intended for the concert-hall. Never having heard any of Handel's operas, I cannot say how far he shows in them a sense of the theatre. But certainly in this work he does not display the possession of that gift. The most notable instance of this failure is the scene where Semele is destroyed by Jupiter. The stage-direction in Congreve's libretto, which, by the way, was originally set to music as an opera by John Eccles, premises the arrival of the god in a cloud whence issue flashes of lightning while "thunder is heard grumbling in the air." Semele cries out for help and is utterly consumed. Handel, writing in his oratorio vein, sets this scene to quiet music, which gradually dies away. It is a beautiful piece of accompanied recitative, but completely misses the dramatic climax required in the theatre. There was no thunder and, owing to one of those unavoidable first-night mischances, the electrician, who had otherwise been emulating the staccato changes of Covent Garden, failed to do

anything about the lightning. In the concert-hall this would pass, because the beauty of the music would carry off what is really a use of the wrong conventional death-scene for this particular situation. But in the theatre it oversteps the limit which may be allowed even in a work "represented," as Congreve puts it, "under the Title of an Opera, where greater absurdities are every Day excus'd."

Nevertheless, the experiment was well worth trying and, provided that one accepted the work as undramatic, the evening proved thoroughly enjoyable. For, although there is nothing to surpass in beauty the two well-known airs, 'Where'er you walk' and 'O sleep, why dost thou leave me?' there are many things which come near to them. It was, by the way, a treat to hear the first of these airs sung by Mr. John Dean, truly according to Handel's direction, *Largo e pianissimo per tutto*; and Miss Bertha Steventon, who was not capable of all the *fiorituri*, rose to the occasion in Semele's great air. Moreover, if Handel shows little sense of the theatre, he was able to put in some delightful illustrative touches. When, for instance, the rape of Semele by the eagle is described, the swoop of the bird is represented in the strings, an effect which was cleverly emphasized by the player of the *continuo*-part on the harpsichord. The music, which introduces Somnus, again is heavy with sleep, even to the point of snoring on the strings with "leads upon the instruments" and in the bassoons' heavy trills. Among the singers Somnus, Mr. Anthony Richards, distinguished himself most. He has a bass voice remarkably rich in a young man, which should develop into something out of the ordinary, and he possesses already a sense of style in singing. Of the other principals, it may be said that their musicianship rather outstripped their technical powers. The chorus were excellent, and had at least two numbers which are fully worthy of Handel's great reputation as a choral writer. Their only fault was that the female voices overpowered the rest, a fact which is due rather to the youthfulness of the singers than to any lack of enthusiasm. The orchestra, which contained only one professional player, after a rather slack beginning acquitted itself well under Dr. Rootham.

The opera was produced and the scenery designed by Mr. Dennis Arundell, who seems to be the Musical Crichton of Cambridge. I have heard him sing, play, conduct, and now have seen him produce—all with equal facility. His present fault in the last capacity lies in not knowing which of his fertile ideas to leave out. He consequently produces a sense of restlessness and of crowding. When, as in the first act and in the Somnus scene, he allowed a moment's repose, he produced some pictures which would have done credit to any theatre. He was well served by Mr. Douglas Williams, who designed the costumes, and by his stage-manager, Mr. Rogers. The production was, indeed, on a sumptuous scale, as may be gathered from the mere enumeration of the livestock: to wit, one white pigeon, which was so well behaved that only an opera-glass revealed its vitality; four pedigree borzois, reputed to be worth £500 sterling a head, who did a maypole-dance round their dog-herd; and, appropriately in the train of Bacchus, two recalcitrant goats.

THE THEATRE

MORE PEER THAN GYNT

BY IVOR BROWN

Peer Gynt. By Henrik Ibsen. Played by O.U.D.S. The New Theatre, Oxford. Feb. 10-14.

IT was a long-winded age. The three-decker novel had its counter-part in the three-decker play, and 'Peer Gynt' is a substantial vessel for adventurers to launch. In theatrical affairs the English are a short-winded nation, and, though 'Peer Gynt' will soon have reached his sixtieth birthday, this is only the third time on which he has walked an English stage. As often happens, the amateurs walk in where the professionals fear to tread. Only at the "Old Vic.," which makes a habit of being unique, have experienced players tried their hand on Master Peer.

He is an elusive fellow. The man who rode the reindeer and bestrid the world is not lightly to be clapped into mash and buskin. Helter-skelter he comes and trailing clouds of helter-skelter philosophy. The story twists and turns, dragging its moral up serpentine paths. "Be yourself and slay yourself." The diadem of self-hood's Kaiser is the straw in the lunatic's hair. So far, so good. Peer's petty Napoleonism is easily stripped bare. Like the onion, which is all wrapping, there is little body to it. But the Ibsen who was later on to preach the necessity of freedom and of self-respect can hardly be satisfied with the mere asceticism of self-repression.

The Gyntish Self—it is the host
Of wishes, appetites, desires,
The Gyntish Self it is the sea
Of fancies, exigencies, claims.

The Gyntish Self may be negation. But what of the positive? How far may a man go along Gynt's road of self-assertion? This, as Master Peer remarked, is an excessively complicated matter, which Ibsen was to answer in more detail in the years of realistic writing that lay before him.

In no way, therefore, has Gynt's play any easy certainties on which we can lay hold. The action is a butterfly-dance over the world, and the word is a butterfly-dance over the ethical dilemmas of the ages. The Oxford production has taken "On with the dance" as its marching orders. The fairy-tale Peer receives far more emphasis than philosopher Gynt. The heavy cutting of the play, which is essential if we are not to have it under Bayreuth or 'Back to Methuselah' conditions, has been made very much at the expense of Act IV. The whole of the Morocco scene, in which Peer discusses Gyntism with international company, has disappeared, and his subsequent arrival in the desert is totally unexplained. Anyone who had not read the play would, I think, have been quite unable to understand its philosophic drift from the Oxford version, and the casual manner in which the onion-peeling episode was represented let the point of that parable slip. Nearly two hours are spent on getting us to the end of Act III, and if the object of the production be to put Peer's creed before us, this is a fatal mistake. For it is in the last two acts that the conflict about self-hood comes to its climax and the intellectual invention of the dramatist goes striding in its fullest strength.

The Oxford producer, Mr. Reginald Denham, has not trimmed the story thus without a purpose.

"Those who are seeing it on the stage for the first time," he tells his public, "are counselled to ignore the purpose of the play and refrain from a search after the ethical meaning of its numerous symbols. Let them rather view it from the same angle as they would listen to Grieg's musical accompaniment to the play (the music itself being an integral part of a dually contrived theatrical entertainment). Let them realize that Peer Gynt is primarily a romantic tour-de-force—an imaginative story, compounded of the human elements of laughter, high-spirits, and quasi-tragic irony." To ignore the purpose of the play! Might one not as well read Hamlet for its plot, Lear for its history, and Macbeth for Scottish geography? I must confess to being more interested in souls than in trolls, and to finding Gynt's ethics more exciting than his antics. There is, I know, direct evidence that Ibsen resented too much philosophic inspection of his poem, and claimed to be having a fantastic riot of fancy-free. But an author is not always the best judge of his own work, and the fascinating feature of Henrik's day-out is in his total inability to stop being profound. He may mount the roundabouts and swings but he cannot propel himself like common clay. He must needs swing between the poles of truth and falsehood. In short, if the purpose of 'Peer Gynt' is to be ignored, I fail to see why its ramshackle yarn should be staged. If it is not a mighty wrestle with the problem of good and evil it is a narrative escapade of no more than ordinary quality, in which irony and beauty come and go but never look like being permanent lodgers. To my mind the play is full of intellectual freaks, misty but immense, and is certainly something far greater than a fairy-tale libretto for Grieg's agreeable tunefulness.

However, Oxford has chosen for an airy, fairy version with more of the sage than the schools about it, with more of the play-boy Peer than of philosopher Gynt, and with more emphasis on the symbol seen than in the symbol probed. Mr. R. W. Speaight, who played Peer, a part which must be three-quarters of the play, however it is cut, conformed to the conception. At the outset he was the village boy turned "fly," and he remained throughout a light-weight Peer, far better in his tender moments than when driven through insolence to taunting and defiance of gods and men. He seemed too lovable, too good a sort, and those who saw the rasping, demoniac Gynt of Mr. Russell Thorndike at the "Old Vic." will realize how much the play loses by this gentleness of touch. Mr. Speaight had not the frenzy of the pettiest Napoleon, and it was difficult to understand why so many people thirsted for his blood, so engaging a youth did he seem. What the actor lacked was something largely beyond his own control, a harshness of personality and a ferocity in attack. What he could give the part, he gave in full. He had no rest during a performance of three and a half hours and never faltered for a word. In Gynt's quiet moments he was delicate and charming, and his sense of comedy was indeed too delicate. The humours of Act IV are fairly crude and need a more robust presentation. Mr. A. Tandy, as the Pastor, delivered his long speech with an exquisite sense of music. The women in this piece have only transitory business. Miss Clare Greet had an answer for all the challenges of

poor, baffled Ase's part. Miss Joan Maude cleverly kept Solveig's wistfulness clear of the mawkish, and Miss Eva Albanesi, in what was left of Anitra's scenes, had really no opportunity to show us whether the flame that vanished when her sister died is to be kindled again from the same hearth. The décor and masks of Mr. Alexander Penrose were suitably Gyntish, and Mr. Denham is to be congratulated on the smoothness of his machinery; the stage at his disposal was not designed for the *well-kinema* of Ibsen's fancy-free.

TEACHING THE CLASSICS: THE OLD METHOD AND THE NEW

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT]

THERE is an impression abroad that the study of the dead languages is becoming as dead as those languages themselves. At this time of the year, when conferences of educational authorities flourish, classical education is the subject of animated discussion.

"The only merit of the old method of teaching the classics was that it was foolproof." Such is the purport of a recent criticism. Is it impossible that a system under which many brilliant scholars were educated, and under which many men of wide literary culture developed, can deserve so severe a condemnation? Were all the teachers of other days fools, or even such a proportion of them as to justify this scathing criticism? I do not suppose that the author of the remark regards his predecessors or even his contemporaries as all fools or generally such. But certainly if we are to accept the dictum we must be prepared to apply the classic "mostly fools" to the members of a large branch of a learned profession. I dare say some critics would reply that the pupils learnt in spite of their teachers, or that the teachers themselves triumphed over the badness of their methods. That there may be truth in both suggestions will be conceded without hesitation. A really brilliant boy will always learn, whatever the demerits of the means employed to aid or hinder his progress; and a man with a natural genius for teaching will produce good results, whatever his method, or absence of method. In fact, the immense importance of the personal factor is often underestimated. A difficulty still remains: Why did not the many undeserving of the opprobrious title quoted improve the methods in use? It is interesting to consider briefly what they did.

Much of the abuse hurled at classical education was more applicable fifty, or even thirty, years ago than to-day. The archaic system of grammatical drill in Greek and Latin irregularities was calculated, especially when unaccompanied by any leavening of translation, to produce a high degree of accuracy tempered by a deadly hatred of those tongues. This evil was accentuated as the pupil progressed by those who insisted on making the classical works he was reading a mere vehicle to carry a burden of grammatical lore. We have all heard of the gentleman under whom it was possible to read Thucydides "without discovering that he was reading history." I well remember a course of lectures on Theocritus, from which an unprejudiced observer might have concluded, not that the author was a poet of great charm, but that he had compiled a weird collection of dialectical and philological curiosities as a burden for the back of his reader.

Unless it is in some strange and out-of-the-way quarter, hidden from the general view, this state of things has been greatly changed. Change has been slow in one place and rapid in another, but has taken place without much advertisement to the world that the more vicious elements of the older methods were vanishing and their places were being taken by new and brighter successors. In fact, in the last generation we have seen the development in the schools of a newer and truer estimate of the value of the Humanities. Boys, even young boys, are trained to see in the

authors they read a real literature: not a series of text-books maliciously perpetrated by the ancients for the annoyance of the youth of the future, but a representation of the ideas, emotions, and speculations of the past. The historical setting necessary to any adequate appreciation of poet, orator, or historian, is seldom neglected in modern teaching, and the importance of the content, as well as the form, is adequately emphasized. The disappearance of the old "construe" which frequently had small claim to be English and was often meaningless, is an unmixed advantage. That a pupil should be trained from the first to realize that his classical author did not write nonsense and deserves the honour of translation into English is a gain in itself, and the process also serves as a useful aid to the acquisition of correct and fluent English.

The widening of the scope of classical teaching has, of course, been the easier thanks to the facilities available in modern times. Improved maps, easily accessible photographs of sites and buildings, and the manifold illustrations provided by the archaeologists, have helped to render the life and actions of the ancients more real to the schoolboy. In fact the conception of the ancient world as a thing by itself, having no connexion with himself or with anything modern, deterred the boy from taking any lively interest in it. Under modern conditions, and with modern teaching, he can hardly fail to realize how modern ancient history really is, and how those who lived and moved and had their being in Rome and Athens were human beings like himself, whose thoughts and actions are interesting in their similarity as well as in their difference.

As education has developed in scope so also have improvements taken place in detail. Improved translation, Latin conversation, Latin plays, Latin debates, have all played their part in making a so-called dead language a very live reality. A comparatively recent addition to the experiments which aim at the improvement of classical teaching is the "direct" method, championed by Dr. Rouse, and the cause of keen dispute among many of those who are enthusiastic in the same good cause, although they may differ as to the means. However great the success of this new method under the personal supervision of the inventive genius with a staff especially trained by him, it is certainly not fool-proof. That at least is an advantage.

TWO POEMS

BY HUMBERT WOLFE

HAREBELL

LIE easy, harebell; Do not wither
Quickly, as blooms that light hands gather.
But burn your little lamp of blue
Steadily, all night through,
Marking for us the small grave,
Where the joy, that we did not have,
And the poem, I might have made,
Are laid.

LOST OLYMPUS

IF love were only to see, and to desire
The things of earth that were desirable,
Till the last ash of the heart had spent its fire,
There were no tale of the spent heart to tell.
But love is not content with that. Love seeks
To make a man and woman in his own image,
Forgetting the ache of wings, and how man speaks
In mortal accent love's immortal damage.
Yes, love would have us gods, and he would stamp us
With the high shapes of heaven, and for a sign
We carry in our hearts some lost Olympus,
Cold as the stone beyond the furthest pine.
The things we see had hurt our hearts enough,
Why break them with your invisible mountain, love?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

¶ The Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW welcomes the free expression in these columns of genuine opinion on matters of public interest, although he disclaims responsibility alike for the opinions themselves and the manner of their expression.

¶ Letters which are of reasonable brevity, and are signed with the writer's name, are more likely to be published than long and anonymous communications.

¶ Letters on topical subjects, intended for publication the same week, should reach us not later than the first post on Wednesday

THE SOUTHERN RAILWAY AND THE PRESS

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—I was delighted to see your 'Note of the Week' in your last issue on the advertising campaign of the Southern Railway. In common, I feel sure, with the majority of travellers on that line, I should be more ready to accept the company's claim that it is "actively engaged in the public service," if the money now being spent in proclaiming the fact were instead devoted to improving the service.

Hastings

I am, etc.,

T. DUGDALE

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—I was astonished to read in your paper last week that the Southern Railway has appointed a Press Agent at a large salary to devise excuses for its shortcomings. The amount of money thus spent—I have observed several large advertisements in the daily Press which must have cost a considerable sum—could obviously be much better spent, as you say, in cleaning and lighting the railway carriages, and also in speeding up the service, and introducing a dozen improvements which have been for years overdue.

I am, etc.,

G. WILLIAMS

Glenluce Road, Blackheath

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—I saw in my paper this morning, while travelling up to town on the Southern Railway, a large advertisement advertising that railway's good intentions. It began: "Tell the public—" and I was just going on to see what they told the public when the train entered a tunnel, and there being no light in the carriage I perforce remained unenlightened! It is a pleasant irony that the Southern Railway's advertisements should be unable to be read owing to defects in their own service! But, personally, I do not want to hear of their good intentions. I should prefer the deed to the will.

I am, etc.,

"SEASON-TICKET HOLDER"

Westcombe Park, S.E.3

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Travelling on the Southern suburban line from Charing Cross last Monday, I found myself in a carriage with no lights. On remonstrating with the guard, I was informed that there were "plenty further up." It would seem that not only is the service bad, but the servants of the company thoroughly ill-mannered. If Sir Herbert Walker and his heavily-salaried Press Agent would look into these matters instead of wasting large sums of money in Press campaigns they would more easily earn the gratitude of their public. They must have a poor understanding of psychology not to understand that their present tactics can only exasperate passengers, who, however docile they may be, are unwilling to believe that black is white.

I am, etc.,

T. ECKERSLEY BROWN

Dartford



Dramatis Personæ, No. 138.

By 'Quiz.'

WINSTON'S "VALENTINE"

THE BRITISH NOTE TO FRANCE ON INTER-ALLIED DEBTS OFFERS HER A CONCESSION IN THE
MATTER OF PAYMENT.

CAN THE LIBERAL PARTY SURVIVE?

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—As a young Liberal I should like to take exception to one or two statements under the above heading, made by Mr. Floyd in your columns. He writes: "The result of the recent General Election has been to sweep away the three-party chaos in which British politics have been submerged since the Carlton Club vote, and to restore a healthy two-party system." May I submit that a three-party system is not a "three-party chaos" as your correspondent suggests, but is rather a much more healthy state of political affairs than the two-party system he so obviously favours? Under the old two-party system, the "ins" and the "outs," there was a growing danger of Cabinet autocracy, of the suppression of independence to rigid party loyalty, and a very grave danger of increased scope for sectional interests. Under a three-party system sectional interests are hindered, for if one party is captured, the others cannot be. Party aims have to be more clearly stated, and lines of demarcation shown on two sides—which is all perhaps very tiresome, but is much more likely to open up all the sides to a question under review. And as there are three distinct bodies of doctrine, three distinct philosophies, before the electorate it is only logical that three parties should contend before us in the political area. The sooner this is realized the sooner we are likely to get reforms of representation. I maintain that the three-party system is a natural growth of the last 100 years, and, for the reasons I have stated, I think a desirable one.

I also fail to see that "the so-called Conservative Party was awake to the new conditions," and that "arrayed in new garments it set out gaily on the forward path with a definite social programme, and, in fact, became the true Progressive Party." It seems to me to lack a definite social programme of any sort, except of the sort stolen from the Whigs while bathing, to plagiarize an old Tory comment. And what progress we are likely to achieve in Egypt after Mr. Austen Chamberlain's high-handedness, or in Housing with Mr. Neville Chamberlain beset behind and before by Trade Unions and Employers' Building Federations, or from safeguarding measures administered by the Board of Trade, perhaps only Mr. Floyd can visualize. It is certainly ironic to refer to a Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer as the greatest of Liberal leaders.

So why compromise on either front? We younger Liberals preach a faith distinct from either Conservatism or Socialism of whatever shade. We refuse to be "suggested" out of existence, or to be wooed from our own clear path. And whatever Mr. Floyd may say, we are determined to provide a virile, active Liberal Party to house the soul of Liberalism which ever, he admits, "goes marching on."

I am, etc.,

FRED. B. HARGREAVES

Clerk Green, Batley, Yorks

[Had it been possible, we should have been interested to see how a Liberal Foreign Minister bettered Mr. Austen Chamberlain's handling of the Egyptian question, or Mr. Neville Chamberlain's handling of the Trade Unions and Building Federations. Does our correspondent suggest that the unions and federations would prove themselves more reasonable to a Liberal Administration. ?—ED. S.R.]

NATURAL SELECTION

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—In Mr. J. B. S. Haldane's second article in your issue of January 10 the following passage occurs:

A far more serious difficulty is the failure of nearly-related species to produce (by natural selection) any offspring, or at any rate fertile offspring. Greyhounds and bull-

dogs, which look much less similar than horses and donkeys, yield fertile young, but no one has yet, as the result of artificial selection, produced an animal which is fertile with its like, but not with the ancestral form. On the other hand, at least in one case, such a plant has been observed to arise under careful observation, apparently as the result of an accident in the process of cell-division. The gap is, therefore, already partly bridged, and we may hope for further evidence on this question in the near future.

We have next to ask whether any other possible cause of evolution besides natural selection is known. Darwin believed in the transmission of acquired characters. But since his time scepticism on this subject has, on the whole, increased.

For what seems to be corroborative evidence of Darwin's conviction on this point, I would here like to draw attention to the case of the otter, or Ancon sheep, which apparently affords an instance of the origin of species among the common or normal breed of sheep, which manifested itself in America in 1791. A farmer of Dover, Massachusetts, who owned a small flock of fifteen ewes and one ram, found that one of his ewes had produced a male lamb of a distinct, aberrant type, having a longer body and shorter and more crooked legs (hence the name otter) than the rest of the flock. When full grown the young ram, after the death of his sire, transmitted his own peculiarities to his issue in many cases by more or less artificial selection, though some of the lambs bred reverted to the ordinary type. Yet so large a number of the other breed were raised, there being a great demand for them in the United States, on account of their inability to jump fences, that they became known as Ancon sheep (Latin *ancon*, elbow) because a Dr. Shuttack observed when they walked that their crooked forelegs protruded like elbows. Another important feature connected with these sheep, indicative of natural selection, is that the Ancons, when put into an enclosure, were wont to isolate or keep themselves apart from the rest of the flock, who were of the normal make.

I thought it worth while drawing attention to the freakish origin of the Ancon sheep, and to their natural, and not acquired, habit of isolating themselves from the rest of the flock in the above connexion.

I am, etc.,

"AFRIKANDER"

LUNACY REFORM

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—While applauding the fine stand made by the National Society for Lunacy Reform, I should like to elucidate the following points.

The circumstances of asylum alienation are in themselves inherently cruel, and any effort on the part of asylum officials can only be very partial in mitigation. The mental patient finds himself a prisoner, deprived not only of personal liberty for an indefinite period, but often debarred from the rights of appeal against impossible conditions. It is obvious that unavoidable amalgamation with criminals adds to the sense of degradation, although in the eyes of the Law he has fewer rights than the felon.

His statements of the truth carry less weight than the mis-statements and falsehoods of thieves and murderers. The public has no idea of the price exacted by these convenient institutions from the officials who have to run them, and whose only salvation must lie in the cultivation of an iron nerve and indifference to suffering, or from the patients who lose everything in life worth striving for.

It is regrettable that cases occur even of sane persons bearing the stigma, whose dismissal presumably must be subject to a period of probation, in itself unnerving, which demands an almost immaculate perfection of conduct and accuracy under trying circumstances.

Periods of sanity naturally occur in curable and recurrent cases, also sentences may be unavoidably prolonged by physical ill-health or normal unhappiness, or not infrequently by the callousness of petitioners in

reclaiming patients for whose breakdown they are morally responsible.

Those in authority need help to grapple with an overwhelming problem, not criticism from those who are augmenting it by their daily lives.

I am, etc.,

T. FAITH BISHOP

Hillcote, Newcastle, Staffs

AN ENGLISH PLAYWRIGHT

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Why, having a playwright of the calibre of Laurence Housman, are we British theatregoers so often put off with empty plays from the French, watered down to inanity for so-called decency's sake? I went last week, by invitation, to see a performance of Housman's 'Little Plays of Saint Francis' given by the University College Dramatic Society. In a hall of which Saint Francis himself would have approved the bareness, the ragged curtain was rung up upon scene after scene of austere simplicity. There was little effort after *vraisemblance* in the clothing of the characters, but not even the obviously modern nether garments of Saint Francis, appearing beneath his friar's robe, could greatly distract one's attention from the really beautiful quality of the acting itself, simple, dignified and sincere, with a suggestion of that "other-worldliness" which is the mark of the true mystic.

In contrast to Saint Francis was Brother Juniper, the "Auguste" of the fraternity, if we without flippancy may call him so, the loving fool, pushing his master's teaching beyond the borders of absurdity, but so humble and devoted that Saint Francis can scarce restrain a smile of indulgence even as he chides. The whole performance was an artistic triumph, which ought to be brought before a wider audience. I do not know if these little plays have so far been produced on the regular stage, but, if not, they most certainly ought to be.

And while on the subject, why does not some manager revive 'Prunella'? Why need we starve in the presence of such abundance?

I am, etc.,

HILDEGARDE GORDON BROWN

QUOTATIONS

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—With regard to the article on 'Quotations' in your issue of January 31, I think that all people who have a good memory, and a delight in *style*—which includes nearly all poets and many artists—love and abound in beautiful quotations. Matthew Arnold quoted habitually and made frequent extracts from what he read: so did the great French master of form Ingres. Chateaubriand always defended quotation as a valuable element of culture, and averred that a happy one is often of the nature of *wit*—a delightful surprise! All my life, over fifty years as a student, I have been attracted to aphoristic wisdom, and am now studying a delightful book of this kind entitled 'La Pensée Française.' It is a perfect Bible of worldly wisdom: but alas! the old do not require its advice, and the young must try their own experience. Henry James is not an aphoristic writer, but in his essay on Greenwich, in 'Portraits of Places,' he has a happy thought, and calls its famous Observatory the *punctum saliens* of the world egg: as the centre from which time and longitude are measured for this planet. I do not know how this idea will strike others, but it seems to me that *Punctum saliens orbis* would be a happy, indeed almost a perfect, motto for the world's greatest city.

I am, etc.,

HAMILTON MINCHIN

22 Caversham Road, N.W.5

SPAIN AND THE RIFIS

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—In your last week's issue, in one of your Notes of the Week, you refer to Muhammed ben Abdul Krim as "a picturesque and resourceful rebel." I can assure you that he is no more picturesque than our own Prime Minister. He dresses as simply and thinks as rationally. You must indeed be labouring under a similar misapprehension to so many other people's in describing him as a "rebel." According to the definition of that word and the laws of war on land and sea established by the Hague Convention, he and his countrymen cannot be described as rebels.

Nor need one necessarily be an enemy to Spain, or lack in admiration for some of the brilliant and charming qualities of that country's inhabitants, in assisting the Rifis to establish an autonomous State under the suzerainty of the King of Spain and the League of Nations. There is but one reason for Spain's interest in the Riff zone, and that is, to be sure that no other European power shall possess the strip of African coastline in such close proximity to her own southern coast. I have returned but recently from the Riff, and feel confident (1) that this country will be more quickly developed under local government than under Spanish rule; (2) that a saving of three hundred and fifty million pesetas a year will enable Spain to develop her own railways and educate her own inhabitants; (3) that Spain and the Riff can work harmoniously together and mutually help one another to protect each other's security, when an autonomous Riff has been established.

I am, etc.,

R. GORDON-CANNING

19 Cadogan Square, S.W.

A READER'S QUERY

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Doubtless other readers will have answered the query of "Curious," in your issue of January 31, concerning two passages from Gibbon.

The first—"I sighed as a lover: I obeyed as a son"—is on page 48 of Gibbon's 'Memoirs,' 1837 edition. The second quotation is, I believe, in the same book, but I have not found it, not having time for the search.

I am, etc.,

C. A. LADSON

Sampson Road, Sparkbrook, Birmingham

"ESTESIAN"

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Can any of your readers inform me when, and by whom, the adjective "Estesian" was first applied to the literary characteristics of S. T. Coleridge? I have a vague idea that I first came on the adjective somewhere in the writings of Mr. Saintsbury, but suspect that he must have had a precedent.

I am, etc.,

Chorley Wood

W.

"SWORN AT HIGHGATE"

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—There is a puzzling allusion in Hazlitt's essay on 'Intellectual Superiority.' Discussing the incapacity of cultured men for flirtation with "chambermaids or wenches at lodging-houses," and doubtless with some thought of those experiences of his own which inspired the 'Liber Amoris,' he says: "Scholars should be sworn at Highgate." I think there used to be taken there an oath, whereby the swearer undertook "never to kiss the maid when he could the mistress"; but in what circumstances was this sworn, and under what mock authority?

I am, etc.,

A. P. D.

NEW FICTION

BY GERALD GOULD

Life—and Erica. By Gilbert Frankau. Hutchinson. 7s. 6d. net.

Ransom. By Anthony Richardson. Constable. 7s. 6d. net.

AGAINST what? And of what? If you produced these questions as counters to the question on the wrapper of 'Life—and Erica,' you would stamp yourself as unsophisticated, which nobody can nowadays afford to be. For the question on the wrapper of 'Life—and Erica' runs: "Is religion the only safeguard?"

Religion is a word variously and vaguely used; and nobody would deny that there are some girls who remain victorious, without the assistance of a creed confessed, over the specific temptation which assailed Erica. Erica herself is brought by tribulation to prayer. But her prayer is of a very odd kind:

"I've been a most awful little rotter—a most awfully poisonous little rotter. You gave me a talent, and I only used it to get money. I've never cared, really, for anything except money, and success, and my own comfort and nice clothes and publicity and getting on in the world. It was only because of my career—because of my silly futile career—that I kept straight till I met North. And I shouldn't have let myself fall in love with North—should I?—if he hadn't been a man with a career, if he'd been poor and undistinguished. I don't know why You took the trouble to save me from North. But You did save me; and I'm grateful to You—so terribly grateful. I wonder if even You know quite what a rotter I've been; if You understand that, even after You'd saved me, I wasn't sorry for what I'd done. I was only angry about it; angry because I'd made a fool of myself. And I wasn't sorry for his wife. . . ."

And so on. It is explained that Erica had, for the purpose of this praying, become a child again; and possibly a child could indulge in the absurdity of being didactic to Deity without reminding us how absurd such didacticism is. It does not sound wholly convincing in the mouth of a clever young woman: one does not see her becoming a child in quite that sense. That she should return to simplicity, put off affectation, turn humble, reject the shows of the adult world, is comprehensible—but: "I wonder if even You know quite . . . ?" Is this really religion? "In that word," Mr. Frankau tells us, giving the clue for the wrapper, "was her only real safeguard, the safeguard which alone might have kept her free from sin." There is, of course, a strong, wise friend waiting in the background to receive the erring girl back to his heart and hearth; but one must be grateful to Mr. Frankau for not making him too strong or too wise—for not cleaning the muddle up and rounding the problem off with the neatness and completeness in which fiction ordinarily transcends fact:

He, even as this Erica—far more than she—had been the egotist. All that he had wanted of her had been her youth, the artist in her, and the clean-run beauty out of which should come the beauty of his own children. The real spirit, the inward beauty of her he had never wanted; hardly even troubled to consider.

"All the artist in him" knew that a period of "spiritual cripplehood" was upon her: "all the imaginative vision in him" could foresee that the day of her cure would be "long a-tarrying." (This is the sort of language in which Mr. Frankau fairly revels: I don't know why.)

Erica has everything against her. That is to say, she has everything in her favour—but the first shall be last. She has youth, good looks, talent and opportunity, in a degree which rarely exalts or afflicts the living. She comes up to London to do caricatures, and finds editors—and Mr. North—at her feet. Indeed, one might say that it is Mr. North who puts some of the editors at her feet. For he is a Power. He is rich, and middle-aged, and clever. He is a Novelist

and a Socialist—dire combination! And he applies himself to the seduction of Erica with a care and thoroughness which she, barely out of flapperhood, her head turned by excitement and success, could scarcely be expected to see through. Moreover, she has that something within which is nowadays modestly called "temperament." She is thus left without either motive or means of resistance, and only accident saves her from complete surrender. She is involved in an ugly scandal, her career is interrupted, her illusions are shattered, and so she finds religion. It is a very old lesson. George Herbert wrote one of the most beautiful poems in the world about it: and it was not new with George Herbert. But it is roughly and generally true that great books are made out of the application of old lessons to new circumstances. Mr. Frankau has not written a great book, but he has written a thoroughly interesting one. Some of the detailed narrative is brilliantly clever. Even the mingled awkwardness and pretentiousness of his style cannot quite obscure his delicacy of observation and fineness of thought.

Mr. Richardson, by a coincidence, has hit upon a similar theme. He, too, tells us that only in suffering can the soul discover itself. His sufferer, however, is not a flapper, but a big man engaged in Big Business. I had almost written "a strong, silent man"—for that is the type: but Brockenholt cannot be accused of silence. "There were few things of which James Brockenholt was not certain"; and he had been called "Black Brockenholt" at school. That is not really the sort of thing that boys are called at school; but Mr. Richardson is out for higher game than reality. He has a splendid, dashing, flashing, flamboyant idea; and he is not going to waste any time on the fine shades, though he is willing to make concessions to the nice feelings. Brockenholt has a mistress, but abandons her to marry a Pure Young Girl. Instead of being redeemed by his wife, he becomes Blacker and Blacker. He is masterful and selfish and inconsiderate, even brutal; and gradually he kills her love, and drives her away. Then, too late, he realizes what he has lost. But he has at least the satisfaction of having discovered Truth. "Only when everything is lost, is all found. It is very simple. It is very hard. But it's true." He addresses his lost lady in thought:

I think we're both free now. I think you as well will think of me like this. Whatever we have done this remains. It is worth while paying for. My dear, my dear, I am so ashamed, but so glad. I am complete, now.

Well, some people are easily pleased. Completeness gained at such a cost is apt to leave deformities which deny itself, and most people do not find it easy to be "glad" about it. Mr. Frankau strikes a much truer and deeper note on this matter. And one may remember Meredith:

O Rafael when men the fiends do fight,
They conquer not upon such easy terms.

But Mr. Richardson, as I have already indicated, is not to be browbeaten by the facts. He even introduces a plot, conceived by Brockenholt's business rival, to shake public confidence in the Brockenholt motor business by linking its owner's name with a private scandal. I think Mr. Richardson gravely misconceives, or bravely misrepresents, the motives which induce the public to buy shares in a motor business. But that does not matter at all. He has chosen his convention and carried it out with flags and trumpets. His strong man, his pure girl, the discarded mistress, whose powdered face is (if I may mix my metaphors) a whited sepulchre within which beats a generous heart—they are all true to type, and to types universally beloved. Mr. Richardson knows just how much uplift goes to how much cynicism, and where the sob-stuff ought to come. I see no reason why he should not best-sell with the best: there is scarcely a note of the appeal struck by recent popular favourites that is not already audible in 'Ransom.'

REVIEWS

POLITICS AND POETRY

Life and Letters of George Wyndham. By J. W. Mackail and Guy Wyndham. Two vols. Hutchinson. 42s. net.

A MEMORY and ensample are secured us by these volumes. It was possible that the public achievement of George Wyndham might be counted as too slight for celebration, and the charm of his personality fade. But now it is ours to discover him in his habit as he lived, and be captured by him. Here, in these letters, is indeed a painted and votive tablet. He reveals himself as the very mirror of *gentillesse*, the modern knight who knows the joy of life in the stress of combat. Of a rich nature, he is touched in fine issues. English, Scotch, Irish, and French strains met in him. Many a recurrent trait of his notable ancestry was to be found in him, and tradition besides heredity constrained. Did he labour under diversity of gifts? Like his beloved Shakespeare, was his in some sort the tragedy of imagination divided against itself? The public life and the private, devotion to literature and devotion to the State, may perchance prove incompatible. It is allowed the statesman, in retirement, to prosecute his studies, if relevant and solid, or furnishing amusement to others. But, chosen for office, needs must he go down into the den, as Plato has it, with never a look cast backward or upward.

These sincere letters might lead one to regard George Wyndham as the delicate hedonist stifled by office. "All my fault for being an artist who has allowed himself to drift into politics." He abounds in picturesque denunciation of his task. He is fain for the wings of a dove and escape. Dr. Mackail almost inclines to doubt whether he ever quite found himself. But the evidence may be read the other way. For him, parliamentary work was family tradition and plainest duty. The knight in him was eager for adventure in the public service. He might lack that four-square and unshaken solidity or stolidity which befits the statesman, but he used "honest effort at complicated jobs." At the time and under the circumstances, his Irish Land Bill was sound and constructive work. He emerges from the dust of controversy raised at his resignation. In office and out, he was loyal, generous, honourable to the degree of quixotry. The welfare of the wide Commonwealth was paramount for him. In behoof of this, he desired a Central Party above and beyond all parties, such Unionism as should be practical and generally accepted. For this, he laboured at the question of fiscal reform. For this, he couched lance against Liberals busied only with the present; against Socialists desiring like himself "a better life for more of us," but frustrating their desire by cosmopolitanism.

George Wyndham loved to trace the springs of Romance till they met the tide of the Renaissance. And it is barely a paradox to hold that poetry, romance, imagination, so far from thwarting, were the fount and origin of his politics. "I see Politics by the light of Art." Poetry is life envisaged as temporal and eternal. Poetry is romance and realism, imagination and observation. These, apart, are frustrate. Randolph Churchill and Chamberlain won affectionate regard as being capable of vision. Romance looks backward for solace and counsel, and the forward world best returns to its youth. The ages are linked each with each in natural piety. "Conservatives who reverence, and believe in, the Past, can alone gaze into the Future." The present, sad or bad, is nothing but as it appertains to what is past and what is to come, said Landor. And so said Byron, one might add, when defining poetry. The statesman must "follow the gleam" through whatsoever murky defiles. To bring back civilization to its permanent principles supremely concerns those who "care for politics and art and letters and who

love their land." Thus did George Wyndham reconcile himself to himself. Craving the personal and private life, he could yield it up for the service of man. He fain would "sing Tirra-lirra by the river with Sir Lancelot," but in his latest days was rebuilding his own village for beauty and use. For the real distinction is not between old and new, but between good and bad.

The mystics are for reconciling temporality and eternity by declaring that we become what we are. George Wyndham throughout was one in his essential personality. His was the Wordsworthian life of admiration, hope, and love. And it would have been pleasant to set the poetry of his nature in the forefront, and regard him as a fair garden to be enjoyed rather than as a problem to be solved. "I wish that people would think and feel and dream more, and fuss and scold less." There is, indeed, too much of the fussing and scolding in matters political and domestic. But here, in these letters, are oases for us and interludes of delight. One can but advise the discovery and enjoyment of them by all such as care for Sabbaths of the heart. Upon the eager and adventurous record of the soldier's life when Egypt called and Khartoum was to be relieved, follow the endless and fervent letters prompted by the stress of policy and the parliamentary whirl. But ever and again comes the intimate and lyrical passage whispering itself forth, brief and discreet. He runs the whole gamut of self-expression. There is the page, for instance, of the curlews and the wild chickory, or that wherein he seeks to portray his mother's charm and grace. Turn by turn, he is exultant and the boy still, or moved to pensive contemplation; and ever, at the thought of England and Greater Britain, returns to his settled vision and good cheer. His father, tenderly dismissing him to the wars, would have him scorn death and erect himself above time and space for "sweet Duty's sake." High-minded, magnanimous, and catholic of spirit, he was another Sidney in latest guise, cherishing poetry and his neighbour, and reft from us all too early.

IN PRAISE OF SLEEP

An Anthology of Sleep. Compiled by Catherine Alison Phillips. G. Chapman. 6s. net.

THERE are some commonplace things we never value while we have them; they seem so ordinary—eyesight, the power of walking, the sense of taste, the gift of sleep. But deprive a man of them, and he will find out how much he has lost. The young never talk of good nights; the old complain that they never have them, missing what was once enjoyed without comment. To be awake, because you must, for forty-eight hours is a humbling experience, for it shows how dependent we are on the capricious God. Make the hours into three weeks, in which pain only allows a short and casual doze, and you will know that sleep is everything, repeating, if you remember:

O sleep! It is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole.

This and many other tributes in prose and verse have been pleasantly gathered in this anthology. The publisher, who must have been sleepy when he forgot an index of first lines, is new to us, and, so far as we know, the idea of the book is novel. Mrs. Phillips shows how the world of writers has celebrated the soft solace of the bed. There we lay aside our cares, we rest, and may even be glorified heroes in our dreams, "in sleep a king, but waking no such matter," as Shakespeare says in one of his sonnets. Sleep has inspired some beautiful sonnets for the wide-searching eye of the compiler. The charm of a host of Elizabethans is great, and John Fletcher supreme among them all. His

Into this prince, gently, oh, gently slide,
And kiss him into slumbers like a bride,

is one of many felicities. Later, we find the grace of the Caroline lyrists, the wonderful simplicity of Blake, and the melody of the 'Lotos-Eaters.' The moderns are apt, as the Preface remarks, to be too sensuous. The ancients, we are glad to see, are not forgotten. Mrs. Phillips gives us in English the elegant little poem of 'Statius,' scraps of Homer oddly bedizened by Mr. Pope, and the gates of sleep which Virgil popularized, somewhat to the confusion of later conveyers. Through the Gate of Horn come the true dreams; the Ivory Gate, which poets naturally prefer, is responsible for *falsa insomnia*. A beautiful passage seldom seen is the prayer of the Chorus for the rest of the tortured Philoctetes in the last play of Sophocles, well rendered by Dr. Way. The "breezes, cool in summer, fraught with sleep" were the only comfort to Philoctetes in his lonely island. Sleep in the open air is the best of all, here duly celebrated by Leigh Hunt. But we miss Stevenson's rapture in his 'Travels with a Donkey':

Night is a dead monotonous period under a roof; but in the open world it passes lightly, with its stars and dews and perfumes, and the hours are marked by changes in the face of Nature. What seems a kind of temporal death to people choked between walls and curtains, is only a light and living slumber to the man who sleeps afield.

Ashby-Sterry, the light lyrist of the Thames, invented a word for the idle sleepers of an empty day, "hammockuity." They are not so vacuous, perhaps, after all. These are the damosels that lure the hero so soon to double-blessedness in the popular magazines.

Though the chief triumphs of melody and grace belong to verse, prose also has its great passages. We read with delight Cervante's blessing "the man who first invented sleep," and the fantasy of Sir Thomas Browne. Cicero bores us. We cherish a vision of "Sir Launcelot du Lake, that lieth under the apple-tree sleeping" which is worth all his commonplaces. However, Mrs. Phillips admits her inclusion of good, bad and indifferent, the quaint as well as the soothing.

Sleeplessness, one of the curses of our rushing civilization, has but two authors to illustrate it in this gentle book, though there is more under other headings, and it should not intrude its hideous woe too far. Perhaps Mrs. Phillips has purposely avoided the 'Insomnia' of Thomson, a dark and terrible poem. "Light a candle and read" is Johnson's sturdy advice. Hardest of all, and never pictured with its full poignancy in prose or rhyme, is the fate of those whose struggle for a bare living reduces day after day the sleep they need. Carlyle's complaint in 'Sartor Resartus,' that "under these incessant agitations" the editor sees "his otherwise robust health declining" and "some portion of his allotted natural sleep nightly leaving him," is a pretty fancy, of course. But the real warning calls up many a labourer in the words of the Proverbs:

Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man.

ANTIQUATED ARCHÆOLOGY

Prehistoric Man. By Jacques de Morgan. Kegan Paul. 12s. 6d. net.

THIS volume forms part of an interesting series which is to survey the whole range of human activities from the earliest times to the present day, other volumes of which we have already reviewed. It appears from internal evidence that this book was written not less than fifteen years ago; if this is the case, it would not necessarily be less suited to its purpose if the author had conscientiously brought it up to date at every point; but it appears to have undergone virtually no revision. Of the works cited in the bibliography one-third have no dates appended; of the remainder

only three, by Boule, Dechelette and Hoernes, are later than 1910 in whole or in part. Boule does not appear to be cited in the text at all, even from his 1921 edition; the citations from Dechelette's four volumes, which appeared from 1908 to 1914, are from Volume I only; Hoernes is represented by about three lines from the old edition of his booklet on the Iron Age; for the last twelve years nothing! This is not dealing fairly with the unsophisticated reader; a single example will prove it. Half a generation ago Mr. Read Moir discovered eoliths at Ipswich; M. de Morgan calls this "just recently" and, on the strength of Boule's 1905 article, dismisses them as indistinguishable from stones not worked by man. Now these stones are widely accepted as proving the existence of Tertiary man; Capitan and Breuil, named by the author among the half-dozen great archæologists of the last fifty years, came, saw and believed.

A commission from Belgium, France, and the United States visited Ipswich in 1922; five of the seven were convinced, the others reserved judgment. Fairfield Osborn accepted the Foxhall flints as long ago as 1921; but M. de Morgan has nothing to say on all this; his only expert is M. Boule of 1905, who, in the 1923 edition of a work cited in M. de Morgan's bibliography, has so far revised his views as to suspend judgment.

The fact is that M. de Morgan ignores all recent work, even in French, and nearly all foreign work of whatever date. There is a single citation from a solitary German periodical—with two blunders in the name. Ten books in German are named, with misprints in names of authors and books, and even errors in gender; half of the few citations in the text are without page references, implying that the original has not been consulted, but only a notice. It is possible that the responsibility for some of these blunders rests with the translators, who render *Terre Neuve* as *Terra Nova* instead of *Newfoundland*, and set a puzzle for the reader by the statement that prehistoric man cut down trees to make pirogues, a sort of elongated trough. Most people have heard of a canoe. Not the least defect of the work is a total lack of proportion and a dread of chronological data. The Iron Age is dismissed in six and a half pages of print without a single date; and this in a work of three hundred pages.

GORKI

Reminiscences of My Youth. By Maxim Gorki. Translated by Veronica Dewey. Heinemann. 15s. net.

GORKI'S autobiography is one of those grand but terrible books which leave us uncertain which excites in us the greater wonder—man's degradation, or the obstinate nobility with which he rears himself from the gutter and strikes his head against the stars. There are, in this underworld of the savage and the poverty-demented of whom Gorki treats, whole ranges of such beast-like greed, cruelty and stupidity, such tigerishness and hoggishness, that really one fears to insult the gentle tiger and the cleanly hog by the comparison. And yet these pages bear witness to a magnificence of courage and of kindness which can rank as nothing short of angelic. It is a queer and an instructive mixture. The boy Gorki himself, persistent in his quest for the things of the mind and spirit, is a heroic figure—all the more so that the man Gorki who paints him in retrospect evidently never dreams of thinking him any such thing. He describes him curtly as "a homeless lad with bad manners and an unprepossessing appearance." He had set out, without knowledge, without money, to acquire a university education: his grandmother, parting from him, had said: "Remember one thing: God does not judge people; it is too flattering to the devil!" He might have been equipped with a worse watchword. His "university" career con-

sisted mainly of manual labour and bitter experience of hardship. But he had two great assets—physical strength and moral enthusiasm: and he certainly learnt a lot of things which are not usually taught in universities.

He picked up a living, for a time, among "stevedores, tramps, and every sort of rogue" on the wharves of the Volga: and highly philosophical some of his companions were. The following passage will give an idea of the atmosphere created by the author's recollections, and incidentally of the excellence with which that atmosphere is rendered by the translator:

I spent two or three nights with them under the dark, dim-starred sky, in the stifling heat of a hollow thickly overgrown with willow bushes. In the damp darkness of the Volga side masthead lights crept about in every direction like golden spiders, and the dark background of the hilly shore was dotted with little balls and veins of fire, proceeding from the lighted windows of the inns and houses in the rich village of Uslon. The paddle wheels of the steamer struck the water with a dull splash; the sailors on the train of barges howled painfully at their toil like wolves; from somewhere came the ring of a hammer upon iron and the mournful drawing of a song. A quiet, smouldering melancholy fell upon the soul, and sadness lay upon the heart like ashes, at the sound of the song.

Strange and inspiring is the brief story of the man who, "as he lay prostrate with starving typhus in a garret," shouted: "Ethics should be a harmonious combination of the principles of liberty and constraint." And later:

"Without synthesis life is impossible," he croaked, spitting up blood as he spoke and clutching my hands with his cold, clammy fingers.

He died in a tramcar on his way to the University. I saw a number of such martyrs for the sake of reason, and their memory is sacred to me.

The book is crammed with these vivid sketches. There is, for a contrast to the last, the thief who "praised highly" the comrade whom he had murdered:

"Why did you murder him?" I asked. "Were you afraid he would give you away?" He was even offended at my asking such a question. "No," he said, "he would not have given us away for all the money in the world. But somehow it did not seem right to associate with him, we were all wrongdoers and he appeared to be a God-fearing man. It was not right."

The account of Gorki's early literary work and of his first love are, of course, full of interest in their own kinds; but the chief value of the book lies in its pictures of queer characters and sordid conditions. It is an epic of such.

REPERTORY IN RETROSPECT

A History of the Birmingham Repertory Theatre.
By Bache Matthews. Chatto and Windus.
7s. 6d. net.

TO give the public the dramatic entertainment it likes, or by enthusiastic effort to teach it to like what is good, which is the true function of the theatre? The second plan appealed to those associated with the institution whose career is described in Mr. Bache Matthews's book. He reveals the methods by which the intermittent but always serious efforts of the society of Pilgrim Players developed into the regular performances of the Repertory theatre. Light is shed upon the ideals of the ardent young men who for more than ten years strove with considerable success to interest the world around them in dramatic works varying in date from Euripides to Bernard Shaw. To have been privileged to produce for the first time Mr. Shaw's colossal play, 'Methuselah,' was assuredly felt to be a real reward. The book is full of information (perhaps almost too detailed) and gains interest from contributions by Mr. John Drinkwater, himself for long actively engaged in promoting the success of the theatre, Mr. Bernard Shaw, and others. Photographs, chiefly of scenery designed specially for this theatre, are a pleasant feature.

BOOK SALES

The book sales of the new year at Messrs. Sotheby's rooms began on February 2 with a three-day sale of properties belonging to several owners. While a number of rare and interesting books appeared, there was nothing of great importance. Among the items of interest, a few may be noted with the prices realized: 'Biblia cum tabula nuper impressa cum summariis noviter editis,' Venice, Simon Bevilacqua, 1498, £15 10s. This book contains a beautiful series of outline wood-cuts which first appeared in the fine Mailermi Bible of an earlier date. 'Le Vite de piu eccellenti Pittori Scultori et Architettori,' Vasari's 'Lives,' Florence, 1568, three volumes in two, a fine edition, £6 10s. 'Herodotus,' first edition, printed in Greek by Aldus, Venice, 1502, a fine copy of an important book, £23, and from the same master printer's establishment, 'Oratores Græci,' three volumes in one, 1513, £15 10s. Another fine Aldine book was the Plato of 1513, first edition, two volumes, £20 10s.

In a bundle of five books, which sold for £3, there was a scarce Cruikshank item, 'The Brilliant Songster,' with a coloured frontispiece by G. Cruikshank. 'Matteo Bandello, Canti XI de le Lodi de la S. Lucretia Gonzaga di Gazuolo,' etc., 1545, first edition and the first book printed at Agen, in the province of Guienne, a very rare book, £22. Milton's 'Poems,' first edition, 1645, wanting portrait and in some other respects not very good, fetched £9 5s. A really fine copy of this book, perfect in all respects, would at present almost certainly realize £400 or £500. Sir John Mandeville's 'Itinerary,' no place or date, but about 1480, was sold for £34. All early editions of Mandeville's 'Travels' in any language are extremely scarce, and some of them of very great value.

A parcel of books, one of which was the first edition of the 'Memoirs of Madame Vestris' with coloured plates and a portrait, was sold for £9 15s. This slim volume is exceedingly scarce in fine condition. The third edition of Bunyan's 'Pilgrim's Progress,' 1679 (the first was 1678), wanting two leaves and otherwise, as is usual, not very good, £27—a low price when the enormous value of the first edition is considered. A fine copy of the first edition would probably realize £1,500. 'The Confessions of an Oxonian,' 1826, a scarce colour-plate book in three volumes, one plate out of thirty-six missing, £10 10s. and Ackermann's 'Colleges of Winchester, Eton and Westminster,' a large paper copy with fine coloured plates, 1816, £40. Gray's 'Elegy,' 1751, the fourth edition, the same year and size as the first, realized £3. A fine copy of the first edition now fetches upwards of £800. E. M. C.



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SHORTER NOTICES

A Midsummer Night's Dream. (The New Shakespeare.) Cambridge University Press. 6s. net.

INSTEAD of discussing the text, which Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch and Mr. J. Dover Wilson have carved out for us out of the 1600 Quarto, from which the Folio text is derived at one remove, it may be useful to tell those readers who have not purchased the earlier works what they will find in it. A frontispiece—the Boughton House portrait of Elizabeth Vernon; an introduction—by “Q.”; a discussion of the copy for the 1600 Quarto by Mr. Dover Wilson; fifty pages of notes illustrative and discursive; a note on the Folio text; and the stage-history of the play; these are the contents of the book, which is a model of the new methods of textual criticism in English, and an admirable example of book production.

Piracy in the Ancient World. An Essay in Mediterranean History. By Henry A. Ormerod. Hodder and Stoughton. 10s. 6d. net.

THE Professor of Greek at Leeds University has written an exceedingly interesting monograph on the prevalence of piracy in the Mediterranean in ancient times. The Mediterranean throughout its history was a happy hunting-ground for sea-borne marauders, with the exception of short intervals during which its waters were effectively policed by the naval forces of successive empires. Crete, Athens, Egypt, Rhodes and Rome were all in turn the guardians of peace over an extent of waters whose numberless creeks and islands afforded safe lurking places for the corsair. When Rome disappeared as a controlling power the lawlessness of the Mediterranean waterways was resumed and was continued uninterrupted until our own day; and possibly, despite the advance of science, future generations may yet see the tale repeated.

Sir Thomas More: The Utopia. Francis Lord Bacon: *The New Atlantis.* Edited by H. Goiten. Routledge. 7s. 6d. net.

THESE two famous books, in modernized spelling, have been carefully edited with an Introduction, Notes, and Glossary, and the ‘Utopia’ has been illustrated for the first time by some charming drawings of Mr. W. Langford Jones. One naturally turns to see what the new editor makes of the ‘Utopia’: is it a mere pleasantries, does it express opinions which More afterwards changed, or how can it be reconciled with the facts of his life? He answers the question by a reference to More’s life-long submission to parental authority which overrode all personal feelings, and was extended to the authority of the Pope in matters of religion, to his starved emotional life, and to the realism of the Renaissance. We can commend the book in every way, it is in clear and legible type, well got-up, and contains everything needful for easy perusal.

Stepchildren of Music. By Eric Blom. Foulis. 6s. net.

THIS is a collection of five-and-twenty short essays on musical subjects ignored by the public at large and belonging, in the words of Samuel Butler, quoted by the author, “to a debatable class between the sub-reputable and the upper disreputable.” Mr. Blom, who has an engaging style and a humorous manner, is a well-known musical critic, and in this book he has done good service by directing attention to authors and works which are forgotten or entirely overlooked, such as Galuppi, Puccini (who was Gluck’s rival), Philidor, or Lortzing, the small works of Beethoven, Wagner’s French songs, the early Tchaikovsky symphonies, or the oratorios of Samuel Butler. The work is well illustrated, mainly from contemporary prints, and should be on every music-lover’s shelves.

Concerning the Nature of Things. By Sir William Bragg. Bell. 7s. 6d. net.

THE ultimate constitution of the universe is not a very easy subject to describe to a “juvenile auditory,” and Sir William Bragg was bold to venture upon it in the Christmas lectures which he delivered at the Royal Institution a little more than a year ago. At least one of his audience, however, was intensely interested in those lectures—thanks to the beautiful illustrations and ingenious experiments with which they were adorned, according to the time-honoured method of the institution which Sir William Bragg now directs. Old readers will find a clear and interesting exposition of the latest discoveries as to the internal construction of the atom and its groupings into gases, liquids, and crystals in the lectures now published with certain additions. The author is one of the greatest living authorities on crystallography, and his gift of luminous description is here put to most serviceable use.

West. By Bryher. Cape. 4s. 6d. net.

THIS unpretentious record of an English girl’s impressions during a trip across America to the Pacific coast is most entertaining. A certain cinematographic jerkiness in the style jars at first, but after a while we get rather to like it. One of the most amusing chapters describes the “shooting” of a film in California; we particularly like the heroine, whose essential respectability is shown by the fact that she always keeps on her wedding-ring, even in movies where she is supposed to be only fifteen, though she has been divorced three times in real life. There is a delightful account of a literary party in Greenwich Village, at which poems were recited of this nature:

The lobster-coloured moon
shines on the ashbin
and my breast alike.
For the world is a rusty nail dropped from
a horse-shoe on a ragged road.

We are at a loss to say whether this is specimen or parody; in either case it is pleasing.

The Bodley Head Quartos, XI, Thomas Nashe. Pierce Penilesse (1592). XII, Anthony Munday. The English Romaine Life (1582). The Bodley Head. 3s. net each.

IN these two volumes of a notable series of reprints we have a life-like picture of late Elizabethan feeling and of the rough cut-and-thrust of everyday existence in London on the one side; on the other a most curious picture of the way in which the exiled Roman Catholics managed to keep up a constant intercourse with their native country and a lively and seemingly accurate account of the English College at Rome. Judging from the way in which the same institution was described by the late Mr. Rolfe in his ‘Hadrian the Seventh,’ it does not seem to have changed much, though the students are better in hand. These reprints are invaluable to students of Elizabethan literature, and we can vouch for their entire accuracy.

Turf Memories of Sixty Years. By Alexander Scott. Hutchinson. 18s. net.

MR. SCOTT’S agreeable memories of the turf stretch back a long long way—to Hermit’s famous Derby—need we remind the present forgetful generation that it was in 1867? This was the first Derby which Mr. Scott attended, and he has only missed one since. He warns us not to credit the venerable fiction that that memorable race was run in a snowstorm. Snow fell both before and after the race, but not during the running, and when the jockeys came in their colours were quite dry. Mr. Scott is as great an enthusiast for racing as was Mr. Jorrocks for hunting, and commends it as a sport to all who would live to a ripe old age. He tells many good and often new stories of owners, jockeys, “bookies” and backers—not least of the silky darlings themselves. This is quite an unusually good book of its kind.

14 February, 1925

THE MAGAZINES

The *Fortnightly* for February gives us Mr. Bernard Shaw's views on financial experts—"almost all commercial experience is to the bad in affairs of State"—and on the future of Ireland. Mr. James Murphy shows the enormous difference of the attitude of 'The Italian Newspaper Press' from our own, and makes intelligible the frequent suppression of journals. Mr. Bohun Lynch deals with 'Dr. Moffat's Translation' severely, but a little in the spirit of the lady at the French play who "did not want to understand the words, she came to see the acting." Mr. Holford Knight in 'The Freedom of the Seas' writes in favour of the immunity of private property from capture at sea under international law. Mr. Douglas Gordon is good on 'The Irrepressible Fox Cub.' Greece, Albania, and European Communism are the subjects of good political articles.

The *National Review* devotes the most important of its 'Episodes of the Month' to the currency question and American control of the Gold Standard. They also discuss the French debt, Germany as financed by America. Lord Colville makes an attack on the gutter press. Mr. Macnaghten claims for 'Æschylus the Divine' the fourth place in the hierarchy of the world's poetry, and gives some pretty translations. Miss Pitt tells of her otters; Gen. Colomb forecasts the future of 'India without Britain' with special reference to the taking of Bengal by Nepal; Sir Hector Duff expatiates on the evils of 'White Men's Wars in Black Men's Countries'; Miss Sellers writes on 'The Old Age Pensioners' Grievances,' and there are other good papers.

Blackwood opens with an account of the great Canadian explorer and Imperialist, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, and begins a series of articles on 'The Foreign Office Services' by an account of the Diplomatic service, its prizes and its grievances. Mr. Jan Gordon describes his meeting with 'The Master Fiddler' in the North of Sweden. Mr. Leonard Whibley has an interesting review of 'Boswell without Johnson,' and 'Musings without Method' deals with France, Germany, America, Mr. MacDonald, and Bewick. The stories are good, as we have come to expect.

Cornhill continues Mr. Weyman's story which is now becoming exciting. Col. Spain describes 'The Silver Cauldron of Gundestrup,' which, he thinks, preserves the images of some "Keltic" gods. Mr. Alban Dobson writes round his father's books; Mr. W. Trowbridge has a dream of 'The British Museum's Vacation'; Mr. Edmund Candler gives us some meditations on pre-historic man in 'The Bull of Altamira'; Miss Sellers describes the French system of 'Mothers' Homes,' and there are some good short stories.

The *Adelphi* has another first-rate paper by Mr. Henry King. 'Newman and Sidgwick' is an essay on the psychology of religious belief. Mr. D. H. Lawrence concludes his account of 'The Hopi Snake Dance': his story is well told, but does he not attribute to the Hopis beliefs of a dark sun, etc., which belong to other tribes altogether? There is a good article on 'The Method of Michael Faraday,' verse by Mr. Edmund Blunden and stories by Mr. Coppard, Mr. O'Flaherty and Mr. Russ.

The *Empire Review* this month draws special attention to 'A Plea for Bushy Whiskers' by Mr. Arthur Ponsonby, who wants to see the "womanly woman" in fashion again. Lord Birkenhead examines the career of Judge Jeffreys and comes to the conclusion that he was a sound lawyer though rather a terrifying judge. Sir Oliver Lodge reviews 'The Life of Lord Rayleigh,' Mr. W. J. Lockyer describes the proofs which show that the sun acts as a magnet, and Mr. F. Gisborne writes on 'Political Parties in Australia.' Mr. W. G. Clifford has an anecdotal article on Shakespeare and Billiards.

The *English Review* has, as usual, a large number of good short papers, among which may be named Capt. Brifaut on 'The War of To-morrow'—gas; Prof. Sarolea on the responsibility of Tolstoy for the Bolshevik spirit—he is at any rate responsible for the weakening of the Russian spirit which has made Bolshevik rule possible. Mr. Pollen writes on 'The Jutland Scandal' and blames Admiral Bacon's way of writing it.

The *Conservative Review* devotes its editorial to a consideration of the advisability of trade with Soviet Russia, and concludes that its disadvantages are greater than any good that can possibly arise; Mr. Robert Machray has a valuable article on 'Petroleum and the Pacific'—a subject of the first importance. Mr. W. J. A. Davies writes on 'Rugby Football in England.' This selection will show the wide range covered by the new Review.

The *World To-day* contains an article by Mr. Snowden on 'The Problem of Inter-Allied Debts,' in which he insists on an early settlement. Mr. E. T. Seton writes on the future of Fur-Supply—we shall have to rear animals for fur soon. M. Emil Fuchs continues his diverting reminiscences as a Court Sculptor, and Mr. Strother tells us how human traits are inherited. 'In the Path of the Legions' is a series of illustrations of Roman remains in Tunisia.

Apollo in its second number contains a paper by Prof. Borenius on some early Italian pictures in the collection of Lord Carmichael; one by Mr. W. G. Constable—not too kind—on Sir Edward Burne-Jones; an appreciation of the work of Mr. Henry Morley; and a further paper on English Tapestries by Mr. W. G. Thomson. The colour illustrations are very good and the general get-up of the magazine, editorial and typographical, is first rate.

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7. Helpless, unfledged, but O how snugly lying!
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Solution to Acrostic No. 152.

J	a	Ques ¹	1 'As You Like It,' Act IV. sc. 1.
G		Uano	
W	allachi	A	
H	illoc	K ²	2 The mole-hill over which William the
I	mmaculat	E	Third's horse stumbled.
T	elle	R ³	3 And every shepherd tells his tale.
T	roo	P	Under the hawthorn in the dale.
I		Odine	'L'Allegro.'
E	xtravaganc	E	
R	oas	T	

ACROSTIC No. 152.—This proved exceptionally difficult. The winner is Mr. G. K. Paley, 21 Keswick Road, Putney, S.W.15, who has selected as his prize 'Our Prehistoric Forerunners,' by C. E. Vulliamy, published at The Bodley Head, and reviewed in our columns on January 31.

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FORTHCOMING PLAYS

THE SCALA THEATRE. Violet Butler (of the "Old Vic.") will present 'The Charm School.' Proceeds in aid of the *Referee* Theatrical Pensioners' Fund. On Monday, February 16, at 8 o'clock.

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DURING last week there was an advance of one penny per gallon in the price of a particular brand of petrol. When asked why such an increase was made while the large distributing fuel companies, such as the Shell and Pratt's organizations, had made no advance in their prices, the reply given was that the penny increase was to meet higher cost of importation. It was further declared that petrol prices in America and other producing countries during the last two years have been unremunerative to producers and refiners, most of whom could only make both ends meet by drawing upon their cash reserves. During the last three months prices in oil producing countries have risen almost fifty per cent. Ocean freights have been increased during the same period in the same proportion. Nevertheless to-day's prevailing prices in the leading oil countries are still about forty per cent. below the average for the last six years. This condition was due to over-production, increase of stocks, and lack of storage to accommodate the surplus. World-wide consumption has now been enlarged to such an extent that the surplus has been absorbed and the ratio of consumption is above that of production.

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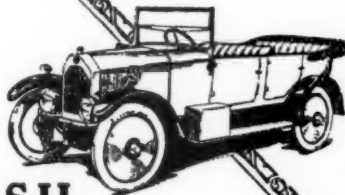
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CITY NOTES

Lombard Street, Thursday

IT has been a source of relief to all of us that prices of stocks and shares can only move up and down; otherwise this week they might almost have moved sideways. The volume of business has decreased still further, with the inevitable result that the majority of prices show losses to holders. The technical position is exceptionally sound. A change of sentiment, which may arrive any day, will start the ball rolling. Meanwhile, we must all exercise patience, and confine our attentions to the few outstanding features which, to use a House expression, offer scope for talent.

AUSTRIAN 6 %

It has been obvious to students of Central European economics that Austria has a difficult road to travel. I do not wish to deny this, but I think too doleful a tale is being spread abroad. It is, however, an ill wind that blows no one any good, and I believe that the astute investor will realize that this is an opportune moment to buy Austrian 6% Guaranteed Stock, which has been marked down to 93½. It may be as well to point out that the Austrian Loan was the first of the Reconstruction Loans arranged by the League of Nations, and to ensure its success it was guaranteed by the various Powers. The payment of interest and repayment of principal was guaranteed by the Powers in the following proportions:

England	...	...	...	...	24.5%
France	...	...	...	...	24.5%
Italy	...	...	...	...	20.5%
Czechoslovakia	...	...	...	...	24.5%
Belgium	...	...	...	...	2%
Sweden	...	...	...	...	2%
Holland	...	...	...	...	1%
Denmark	...	...	...	...	1%

Each guaranteeing Power has lodged bonds to meet their liability. Under these circumstances, believing as I do that Austria is not *in extremis*, and appreciating the very tangible value of the guarantees, I think this is a good opportunity for investors to purchase Austrian 6% for permanent investment purposes.

AUTOMATIC TELEPHONES

My attention has been drawn to the £1 Ordinary shares of the Automatic Telephone Manufacturing Company. The issued capital of the company consists of 200,000 6% Cumulative Preference shares of £1 each, 360,000 Ordinary shares of £1 each, and £210,000 6½% (tax free) debentures. The debentures are repayable on or before January 1, 1936, at 102%, at the company's option on six months' notice. The company was formed in November, 1911, by the British Insulated and Helsby Cables, Limited, to manufacture telephonic, telegraphic, and other appliances and equipment generally, and in particular automatic telephonic apparatus on the Strowger System used by the Automatic Electric Company, of Chicago, which has proved so successful in the United States. Work in connexion with automatic telephony was interrupted during the war, and the company's activities were devoted to the manufacture of war material. It has completed some important contracts for the British Post Office, and among the Exchanges now working the system are Leeds, Portsmouth, Newport, Chesham, Paisley, Accrington, Darlington, and Epsom;

and also the General Post Offices at Simla and Lahore. The all-important development for 1923, which, however, is not directly reflected in the results for the year, is the adoption by the General Post Office of the Strowger Automatic Telephone System for London, and the signing of a contract with the company for initial orders for equipment amounting, approximately, to £1,500,000. The Strowger Automatic System has now, in fact, become the standard system for the British Post Office for public telephone service, and the example set by this country has already influenced the decisions of telephone administrations throughout the world. The conversion of London from manual to automatic working is probably the largest and most important work that has ever been undertaken in the telephone industry, and it is a task which will keep this company, and the other manufacturers concerned, busy for some years to come.

SHELLS

For the last few weeks I have been advocating a purchase of Shells and prophesying activity in the oil market. I based my forecast on indications reported to me from America, that not only would the price of Pennsylvania crude rise, but that the States were on the eve of an oil boom. For the last week I have read daily of buoyant oil share markets in New York; yet so far the London market has failed to respond. No sooner do Shells rise one-eighth than heavy liquidation ensues from unknown sources. The public in this country had a bitter lesson in oils recently enough to make them chary of coming in again. I still feel that the oil market will be the first to spring into activity. If my hopes are fulfilled, not only will Shells rise, but also Royal Dutch and Lobitos, and among the more speculative counters, V.O.C., Anglo-Ecuador, and British Controlled.

WEST AFRICAN MAHOGANY

It does not often happen that a company has to wait twenty years before it reaches a revenue-earning position. It therefore speaks volumes for the tenacity and confidence of the directors of the West African Mahogany Company that, after an uphill fight since 1904, the company is at last within sight of becoming a dividend payer. It was formed to cut mahogany on its vast concessions in West Africa and ship the logs to this country. The completion of the new Gold Coast railway, which crosses the company's area, has at last made this a feasible proposition. It is estimated that the company owns over half-a-million tons of mahogany. At the present price a profit of £4 to £5 a ton is shown. At least 20,000 tons can be shipped in a year. The first regular shipments will be made this month. The issued capital is £100,000 in 5s shares. There are no debentures and no preference shares. The company has £25,000 working capital in its coffers. Its chairman is the head of a timber firm of world-wide repute. I make no reference to the half-dozen gold mines said to be located on the company's concessions, or to its trading rights and other assets. As a timber trading company pure and simple it possesses great possibilities, and on this account I draw marked attention to these shares, which at present stand at 7s. 9d., and which, if all goes well, within a few years may be receiving the best part of the present purchase price annually in dividends.

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Company Meeting

THE GAS LIGHT & COKE COMPANY

THE Two Hundred and Eighteenth Ordinary General Meeting of the Proprietors of The Gas Light & Coke Company was held on February 6. Mr. D. Milne Watson (the Governor of the Company) presided. The Secretary read the notice convening the meeting. The report and accounts were taken as read.

The Chairman said:

SATISFACTORY INCREASE IN BUSINESS

Business during the past year has been very satisfactory. We have had an increase in output of 6½%, which represents in a Company of this magnitude a very large additional quantity of gas sold.

We have spent a large sum of money on Capital Account, viz., £616,000. Of this, £122,000 was for land, £100,000 for buildings and machinery in extension of Works, £145,000 for additional mains and service pipes, £72,000 for new meters, and £177,000 for new stoves.

The land was acquired for extension of works and new premises for district offices and showrooms, necessary owing to the enormous increase in our business in the last few years. For the same reason we were compelled to spend large sums on new mains and services and new meters required by an ever-increasing number of consumers. Additional stoves have had to be provided to satisfy the demand brought about by the extension of heating and cooking in all our districts. Against this expenditure of £616,000 we have written off £70,000.

Coal cost us more in 1924 than in 1923. There was a small increase in the price, but the greater part of the additional expenditure of £250,000 was due to the larger quantity consumed owing to the increase in business.

Oil also cost us more for the same reason.

KEEPING ABREAST OF IMPROVEMENTS

You will observe that there has been a considerable advance in the expenditure on repairing and renewing stoves. This is due to the policy of steadily eliminating the old-fashioned types of cookers and fires and bringing them up to date.

In other directions also the Directors are taking steps to keep the Company abreast of all modern improvements.

Under the heading of Co-partnership there is an increase of expenditure, owing to the larger number of Co-partners and to a somewhat higher bonus for the year.

On the other side of the Account, the income for gas, viz., £6,279,608, is practically the same as the year before, although the price of gas over the year 1924 was lower than in 1923. This is due, of course, to the increase in the sale of gas.

The Company realized £230,000 more from the sale of Coke and Breeze than in the previous year, but unfortunately this was counterbalanced to a large extent by a falling off in the revenue from Tar and Ammoniacal Liquor. I regret to say that the future outlook in the Residual Market is far from good, and we shall have to face a large decrease in revenue from this source.

The net result of the year's working enables us to pay the dividend (of 5½%) we are entitled to under the sliding scale and to carry forward £223,000.

As mentioned, the Company has had an increase in business of 6½%. This represents a quantity of over 2,000 million cubic feet, or 10 million therms, equal to the total requirements of a town as large as Portsmouth or Brighton for a year.

STRIKING PROGRESS IN THE GAS INDUSTRY

You will understand how extraordinarily alive the gas business is in London when I tell you we had a record year for total sales of gas, and also a record day's output on December 10, when we sold 166 million cubic feet of gas.

Considering the progress of this Company and other Gas Undertakings, it is strange to find that there are many people who still think that the days of gas are numbered.

It is difficult to account for this belief. It may possibly be due to the fact that gas as a means of lighting is not so much in evidence to-day as it was in the past, the result being that the casual observer may get the impression that gas is disappearing altogether. How many people realize that the wonderful lighting in Whitehall and many parts of the West End is done by gas, and that this Company alone lights no less than 1,000 miles of streets? When I tell you that the output in a district like Bond Street or Piccadilly, in which it is difficult in the course of a walk to discover that gas is being used at all, has increased during the last twenty years by more than

20%, and that in the Harley Street district more gas for domestic purposes is used per square mile than in any other part of London, you will see that our position is really a very strong one.

I was much interested recently on looking at an advertisement issued by a well-known London Hotel some thirty-five years ago, in which they indicated in bold letters that "no gas" was used on their premises. To-day that same hotel is using gas to the extent of a million cubic feet per month.

20 PER CENT. INCREASE IN 3 YEARS

Since the year 1921 there has been an increase of no less than 20% in the sale of gas, an increase equal in quantity to 6,000 million cubic feet over a year, and an increase in the number of cooking stoves and fires placed out on hire and sold of over 200,000.

At last year's meeting I drew attention to the fact that the Gas Light and Coke Company alone produced approximately in a year as much energy for light, heat, and power as is produced in the form of electricity by the whole of the Electrical Undertakings in Great Britain. There was a great deal of astonishment expressed at that statement, but it has never been controverted.

A COMPARISON OF COSTS

There is another aspect of the matter to which I should like to draw attention, viz.: the revenue from the sale of gas or, to put it in another way, the cost to the consumer. For the vast quantity of heat units that were supplied by this Company during the year for all purposes, viz., 183,000,000 therms, the consumers paid just over £6,000,000. Were the electricians called upon to replace the use of this gas by electricity, it would mean that they would have to furnish a supply of over 5,000 million Board of Trade units, and if these units were to be sold at a total cost to the consumer of £6,000,000, it would be necessary for the charge per unit to be in the neighbourhood of a farthing. On referring to one of the recently-published Electrical Trade Journals, the average charge for electricity for all purposes was found to be as nearly as possible 2d. per unit. Even allowing for a claim for a somewhat higher efficiency of utilization to which the electricians might consider they were in some cases entitled, there is no justification, if any regard at all is to be had to the economics of the question, for the agitation in some quarters for the introduction of electricity for every domestic purpose.

THE ECONOMIC SOURCE OF HEAT

The figures I have given appear to me to make it clear that in a country where, for all practical purposes, our supplies of electricity, as of gas, are dependent entirely upon coal, there can be no question of electricity economically displacing gas as a source of heat in our homes and factories.

Apart from this aspect of the matter, there is the question of conserving the country's resources in the way of coal, where the advantage, as has so often been pointed out, lies heavily in the direction of gas manufacture.

I do not for one moment want it thought that electricity could, or should, be entirely superseded by gas, because there are places in which, and purposes for which, electricity is eminently suitable, but I have mentioned this matter in order to show that it is wrong to think that the country would be the gainer by displacing gas by electricity.

"FAIR PLAY AND NO FAVOUR"

The public evidently appreciate gas or they would not use it in largely increasing quantities, and it is only right that politicians and others who are in positions of authority should know the truth. What we want is fair play and no favour. In particular, if the State is going to give financial assistance to electricity, in common fairness the same privilege ought to be extended to gas.

I am most anxious to let the public know the real facts of the case, as there seems to be a tendency, specially among politicians, to boost electricity at all costs. There is a large field for both gas and electricity in which to work for efficiency and economy, the saving of labour and the cleansing of the atmosphere of our towns.

The Company joined with other Undertakings in carrying out a joint Gas Exhibit at the British Empire Exhibition. The exhibit was a great success, and was visited by hundreds of thousands of people, and it is interesting to know that, throughout the length and breadth of Great Britain, it has led to increased business. We have, therefore, decided to exhibit again this year at Wembley, and we hope to obtain equally good results.

CO-PARTNERSHIP

Co-partnership is working extremely well in the Company. There are now 12,543 Co-partners, holding altogether nearly £500,000 Ordinary Stock of the Company, together with a large sum on deposit. During the past year our relationship with our men has been of a very pleasant character.

In these days when so much is being said about the necessity of improving the understanding between Capital and Labour, I may be pardoned, as head of one of the largest concerns working on Co-partnership lines in this country, if I say a few words on the subject. There would appear to be three common objections to Co-partnership from the point of view of its general adoption. First, that losses are not shared as well as profits; secondly, that Co-partnership is not suited to businesses which are here to-day and gone to-morrow; and thirdly, that small businesses would find it impossible in many cases, and difficult in others, to arrange for the sharing and transfer of capital to the employees as can be done by a large undertaking.

With regard to the first objection, it seems to me to be unreasonable and, in fact, impossible to expect a wage-earner to assist in sharing a loss, however small.

With regard to objection two, it may be perfectly true that it does not suit ephemeral businesses, but there are thousands of companies which have been established for many years which might very well institute co-partnership at once.

There is a real difficulty in the third case. While it is extremely desirable that men should hold stock in the Company for which they are working, there is no reason why the bonuses should not be invested for them in some Government or Local Authority security, the stock being held under regulations such as are in force in the case of this Company as regards co-partnership stock.

Our method for computing the bonus each year is that a sum calculated at the same rate as the dividend paid by the Company on the Ordinary Stock is given to each Co-partner on a certain portion of his earnings. There is a basis which could be applied to any business. The small business with large labour costs could adjust the proportion of wages to be taken as hypothetical capital so as to give a fair bonus.

RELATIONS WITH LABOUR

The Gas Industry has, up to now, been very fortunate in its relationship with the men working for it, and I hope it will continue to be so. Not a little of the success is due to the fact that so many of the men in the Industry are Co-partners. We have a Joint Industrial Council for the Industry which has worked very satisfactorily.

I regret to say, however, that there is at present a deadlock in the Industry.

The men's leaders have put in a claim for an advance of 12s. a week in wages, time and a quarter for night work, and 14 days' minimum holiday per annum.

The Gas Industry does not see its way to agree to any of these claims, particularly in view of the serious slump in the Residuals Market, which may affect the price of gas throughout the country. The Employers, on their side, claimed that the conditions of the sliding scale under which wages had been regulated should be modified. We did not propose, however, any reduction in wages at the present time.

This being the position, we offered to go to arbitration on the whole dispute. Our offer, however, was turned down by the Trade Union leaders, who would only agree to an arbitration on their own demands.

We are working under an agreement which continues until March 31, and I hope that before then the men's leaders may see the fairness of submitting both claims and counter-claims to arbitration.

I notice that Mr. Hayday, the Trade Union Leader, inferred in a statement made yesterday that the Industry should pay higher wages because the average increase in the cost of gas to the consumer was only 50% above the pre-war price, whereas the cost of living was 80% up.

I cannot, however, agree with Mr. Hayday's claim. The Gas Industry is a three-fold partnership—the workers, the consumers, and shareholders. The facts are: The Workers are already receiving from about 80% up to 120% above pre-war wages, and, therefore, in their case the increased cost of living has been fully met; whereas the Consumers are paying 50% and more for their gas, and the shareholders are in a still worse position, because they are only receiving about 10% more in dividends than before the war, and this leaves out of consideration the heavier Income Tax which has to be paid.

If wages went up it would mean an increase in the cost of gas and a lower dividend, because we work under a sliding scale.

Any increase in the price of gas would fall heavily upon the working classes, who depend so much upon gas both for light and heat.

In addition to Co-partnership, we have contributory pension schemes in full operation which are of the greatest benefit to all Co-partners.

We also take care of the physical wants of our employees by providing Sports Grounds, which give them the opportunity for healthy exercise.

"THE RANGERS"

I am glad to say that we have been able this year to revive the old connexion which existed between the Company and the 12th Battalion of the London Regiment, usually known as "the Rangers." It is gratifying that there has been a hearty response to the appeal that has been made in this direction.

To meet the enormous demand for the supply of gas the energies of the Staff, both officers and men, have been taxed to the utmost, both indoor and outdoor, and I am glad to say that they, as a whole, have risen to the occasion and worked splendidly. I do not think there is any Company better served than this one is in this respect.

You will be interested to see that we have been redecorating our premises here. One of the fallacies we have to fight is that gas is old-fashioned. We have endeavoured, therefore, to show that it is not so, and that it can be used with success for both lighting and heating in beautiful surroundings.

The report and accounts were adopted.

Presiding subsequently at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Proprietors of the Company, for the purpose of considering the Bill now before Parliament, the Governor (Mr. D. Milne Watson) said:

You have just had read to you the Heads of the Bill which is being laid before Parliament, and the Sections which deal with the acquisition by the Company of the Undertaking of the Brentford Company will no doubt strike you as being its most important feature.

I feel sure it will be an advantage to both companies. The Gas Light and Coke Company is naturally anxious to have a free opening to greater London and the suburbs, and the enlarging of our district will, I am sure, be an excellent thing for the Company and the consumers generally.

At the same time, the Brentford Company, who, by the nature of their geographical position, are cut off to a great extent from the advantage to be gained by possessing an easy access to the sea, will benefit by the facilities in this and other directions which the Gas Light and Coke Company can bring to them.

I beg to move that the Bill be approved, subject to such alterations as may be made in the Bill by Parliament and approved of by the Directors.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Henry Woodall, and carried unanimously.

Company Meeting

HOME AND COLONIAL STORES

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Home and Colonial Stores Ltd., was held on February 12, at the offices of the company, Finsbury, E.C. Mr. H. G. Emery (Chairman and Managing Director) presided, and in moving the adoption of the report and accounts, said that the net profit for the year amounted to £341,246. The total reserves of the company now amounted to £1,051,660, being slightly over one-half of the subscribed share capital, a fact which testified to their strong financial position. At the end of last July the board had had an opportunity of acquiring a substantial interest in the business of one of the company's competitors. They decided not to let the opportunity slip. Proceeding, the Chairman dealt with the question of the rise in the cost of living. Public attention, he said, had been directed in the late autumn to the market prices of food commodities by the rise in the Ministry of Health index figures. Amongst the articles concerned was tea. The buyers had anticipated a high market, and purchases made at the commencement of the season had enabled the company to maintain a low range of retail prices for its well-known blends. The company's cheap stocks were not yet entirely exhausted, and the prospects were favourable to the company maintaining the quality of its leading lines without further increase of prices. It was interesting to note that their tea had been so well bought that if during the latter part of the year it had been sold on the Mincing Lane Market, instead of through the company's branches, the profit would have been many times larger. As they knew, there was a Royal Commission sitting to consider food prices, and also speculation in regard to the food of the people. In his judgment the market operator was a world's benefactor, for without the market fluctuation which his operations brought about the world would, in a very little time, be short of all supplies—especially food supplies. At a meeting of the Royal Commission on Food Prices it had been suggested that a new Government Department of supply should be set up to effect Empire food purchases in bulk, and to distribute to the nation. If the arrangement were to benefit this country, the prices must be fixed by us, and must necessarily be low. The Colonies appeared to know quite well how to look after their own interests, and what the Royal Commission was really up against was that this country was gradually being rationed, not as in war-time by a Food Controller, but by the producing countries of butter, cheese, meat and tea.

The Report and Accounts were adopted.

Company Meeting

SOUTH METROPOLITAN GAS COMPANY.

THE ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of the proprietors of the South Metropolitan Gas Co. was held on February 11th at the Cannon Street Hotel, E.C., Mr. Charles Carpenter, D.Sc., M.Inst.C.E. (the President), in the chair.

The President said: Ladies and gentlemen, it is with pardonable pride that, in presenting the report of your board of directors for the year 1924, I associate with it a reference to the fact that the past year was the centenary of our existence as a gas undertaking. It is also pleasing to record the fact that, while "Failure of Electric Light" is quite a common headline nowadays, even where its generation is in municipal hands, gas supply goes on uninterrupted.

Owing to the War and the shutting down of German supplies there was a great dearth in America of the materials used for making incandescent gas mantles; their production fell off in consequence, and electric glow-lamps were largely substituted, with the result to which I have referred. It has been our custom to lay by a large store of these important materials, and with them we were able to give substantial support to the mantle-making industry here during that anxious period of our history dating from the outbreak of war. We have now replenished our stocks and are again in the happy position of independence, while our staff has acquired for emergency use a knowledge of the technique of mantle-making.

In ordinary use a small gas mantle ought to last a year at least; they often last considerably longer, but I am not quite sure that such a life would appeal strongly to the manufacturer, for in this case, as in some others, his profit may largely depend upon what is wasted rather than upon what is used.

I pass from this matter to the question of the supply of coal—our all-essential and important raw material. We want clean coal and cheap coal if we are successfully to carry on our undertaking. This necessity is paramount. How are we to achieve it? It is our very life-blood, and upon it depends our vitality, and, indeed, our existence.

Well, ladies and gentlemen, the very last thing that, as large users of coal, we want to see come about is the nationalization of the mines. (Hear, hear.) If such an ill-conceived proposal were ever put into effect it would mean "good-bye" to cheap and efficient coal production. The whole country would suffer from the inefficiency and insufficiency of a bureaucratic parasitical organism drawing a maximum of self-nourishment from the community, and yielding a minimum of efficiency. Most of us had some experience of governmental management during the late war, when, but the efforts of private manufacturers, the country would have cut a sorry figure indeed. That there were abuses is undoubted, but these themselves not infrequently originated with governmental control, and the blame of accepting temptations to costliness which emanated from those in authority must not wholly rest upon the manufacturer. Be this as it may, and speaking with great deliberation on the part of this company, I repeat that the last burden we are anxious to bear is a nationalized coal supply. Neither have we any desire to be required to obtain our supplies from a huge organisation or federation of the whole or part of the mining industry.

As in all other industries, different conditions and methods of labour and efficiency pertain, not only to individual areas, but to different mines. And we should view with dismay and alarm proposals whereby the economies pertaining to some were cast into a common melting-pot, where good and bad material would be inextricably mingled, standards of comparison lost sight of, and the stimulus of competitive working, more necessary than ever in internal application to the industries of this country, denied its fullest expression. The crying need of the consumer to-day is for free markets within the land. If, owing to high costs or low returns, a mine ceases to be profitably worked, surely it should be closed down unless local conditions can be adjusted to meet its exigencies. But the pernicious proposal of "robbing Peter to pay Paul," by bolstering up the inefficient by the better working of the efficient, can only lead to disaster, in which the community as a whole would be the sufferer. One of the defects of the labour system of to-day is its organization into more or less watertight compartments. The correctives for unemployment in the coal industry should be extended employment in another needing development; in other words, that the underground unemployed might turn their hands to work above.

The imperative demand of to-day is the adoption of the co-partnership principle in the mining industry. The employees would then feel they had an interest other than as mere wage-earners in the industry with which they were associated, and a spirit of pride in their employment, an emulation in efficiency, thereby being engendered having a quality of the kind which has been so clearly expressed in our own case for over one-third of a century. I believe the employers as a whole would be sympathetic. I believe their fear is in the attitude thereto of the unions, who seem at times to put their faith in the sword rather than the olive-branch. Many years ago this company was fought by the union on the subject of the continuance or the abolition of co-partnership, and upon nothing else. Since then the relations of employers and employed have been characterized by peace and contentment, happiness and efficiency. Will never the truth

become known or accepted that there is no valid reason why the blessings enjoyed by the gas consumer should not be extended a preceding stage, namely, to the coal user? I have observed from time to time prominent persons—generally political, sometimes academic, at times even aristocratic—announcing their association with an organization promoted for the purpose of furthering the ideals of labour. May I offer the suggestion that if they would but join the South Metropolitan Co.'s partnership they would have a splendid opportunity of becoming acquainted at first hand, if not with the labour problem, at any rate with its solution?

I now turn to financial matters. You will observe that we have paid off the temporary preference stock issued under the Act of 1916. It was urged at the time that when the war disturbance righted itself the need for this capital would cease. Unfortunately it turned out that, with but little diminished working costs in all directions, our requirements increased rather than diminished, and we had to supplement the issue later on by the issue of debentures.

As regards the working results of the year, these have proved disappointing. Success, as I need not remind you, largely depends upon the closeness with which coal costs are approached by residual values. The latter, however, slumped much sooner than the price of coal fell, and, as you will observe, we have had to dip very deeply into the balance brought forward from the last account. Whether the average price at which we can buy coal for the current year will enable us to balance the deficiency is uncertain, and, furthermore, the problem of cheap gas supply is not helped by the upward tendency of wages generally. But, whatever happens, I can assure the dweller or worker in South London that he need not be made anxious by alarmist headlines on contents bills of "London in Darkness"; he may continue to rely upon his supply of lighting gas.

In connection with the price of gas, there is a very important matter of policy which I must introduce at this stage.

Now, two courses are open to us. Since we cannot depend upon the cost of coal, or labour, or the values of residuals remaining at a constant figure year after year, we must choose one of two alternatives.

The first is to charge a level price for gas, high enough when times are good to recoup losses when times are bad. This method covers up, if I may say so, the necessity for announcing from time to time changes in the price of gas, either down or up as the case may be, the latter occasion being, of course, unpopular with the consumer.

The other policy is always to work with as little margin as possible, even though this course necessitates the unpleasant need from time to time of increasing the price.

Finally, I must refer to the loss sustained by your directorate by the death of their colleague, Mr. Kenneth Hawksley. It is fourteen years since he was elected by you in place of the late Mr. Cardwell. In his temporary absence abroad at the time acknowledgment was made of your confidence by his father, the late Mr. Charles Hawksley, father and son both being associated with an old-standing firm of civil engineers, widely experienced in gas and water undertakings. We are the poorer by the death of both these shareholders, whose interests in gas dated back to the early days of the industry. By the election of Mr. B. R. Green, the board have a colleague whose knowledge of gas supply and association with other important gas undertakings provide specialized assistance in the conduct of a business which becomes more and more exigent in these respects.

I have much pleasure in moving: "That the report and accounts now presented be received and adopted, and the report entered on the minutes." (Applause.)

Mr. Frank H. Jones, M.Inst.C.E. (Vice-President), seconded the resolution.

The resolution was then put to the meeting and carried unanimously.

The President next proposed: "That dividends as follows for the year ended December 31 last be now declared, viz.: 5 per cent. on the Redeemable Preference stock, and 5½ per cent. on the Ordinary stock, and that warrants be transmitted to the registered addresses of the proprietors by post for the amount of such individuals, less the interim dividends paid in respect of the first half of the year."

Mr. Benjamin R. Green seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

On the proposition of the President, seconded by Mr. John Mews, LL.D., Mr. Arthur M. Paddon, M.Inst.C.E., was re-elected to the Board, as was also Mr. Frank Bush, on the motion of the President, seconded by Mr. E. Honoratus Lloyd, K.C.

Mr. George S. Fry, C.B.E., was re-appointed an auditor of the company.

An extraordinary general meeting was then held to consider the provisions of the Bill now before Parliament entitled "A Bill to allow of Agreements between the South Metropolitan Gas Co. and other gas undertakers for mutual assistance, and for other purposes."

The Secretary having read the notice,

The President explained the Bill, the object of which, he said, was to enable the company to effect working arrangements by mutual agreement, and moved the resolution approving it.

Mr. Frank H. Jones (Vice-President) seconded the resolution, and it was carried unanimously.

A cordial vote of thanks to the Chairman and Directors terminated the proceedings.

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